

## **PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT DECEMBER 2004**

This report contains an Executive Summary, descriptions of the Eugene planning area and related planning efforts, and community and demographic profiles. Public involvement findings are summarized along with the results from the technical analyses of facilities, programs, and finances.

### **I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

#### **A. Introduction**

This report summarizes the Community Needs Assessment completed in September 2004 in association with the City of Eugene Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Comprehensive Plan. Key findings from the following reports and activities are presented and synthesized to define community needs and preferences in terms of parks, recreation, and open space facilities and programs:

- Public Involvement Findings
- Parks and Open Space Analysis
- Recreation Programs and Services Analysis
- Financial Analysis

Figure 1 illustrates how the community needs assessment process included public involvement opportunities as well as a technical analysis of facilities, programs, and finances. These findings are the foundation for the strategies and actions developed for the PROS Comprehensive Plan and will form the basis of Eugene's plan for the next 20 years.

#### **B. Public Involvement**

To develop a solid foundation for the Comprehensive Plan, the Community Needs Assessment solicited feedback from a broad spectrum of City residents and staff regarding their needs and preferences for parks and recreation services. Over 2800 residents participated in the planning process. The public involvement activities included the following:

- A statistically valid community survey of 437 households;
- A youth questionnaire completed by 647 high school and middle school youth;
- A display at the Eugene Celebration, where residents completed 456 questionnaires;
- Focus groups with Library, Recreation and Cultural Services (LRCS) staff, maintenance staff, recreation providers, and representatives from the Eugene business community and from cultural communities to identify needs and preferences;
- A Speakers Bureau with 44 presentations to community groups and organizations. A total of 1085 community members attended, and 751 questionnaires were completed;
- A survey of organized sports providers, with 15 questionnaires returned;
- Twelve stakeholder interviews with identified community leaders; and
- Meetings of the Mayor's Advisory Committee and Steering Committee.

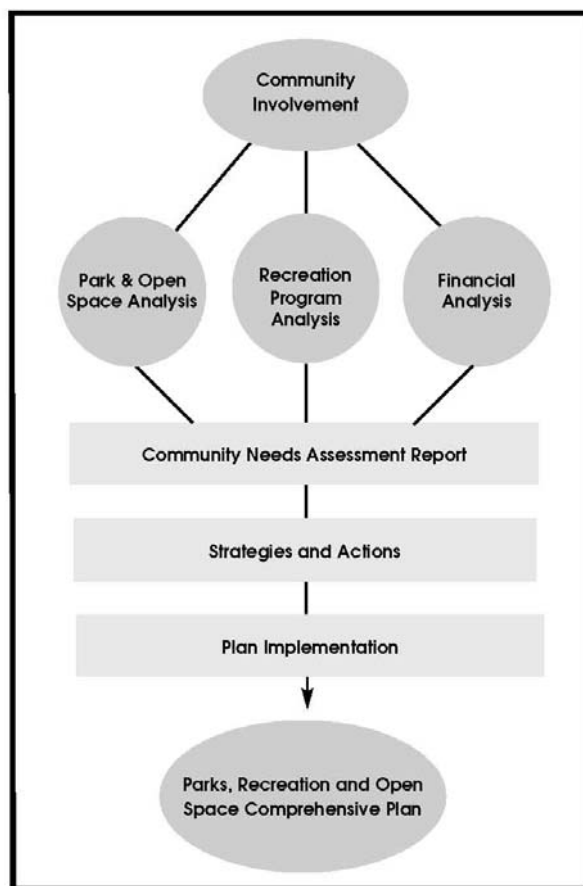


Figure 1: PROS Plan Overview

### C. Key Findings

Several key findings emerged from the public involvement process and analyses of parks, programs, and finances:

- Eugene’s population has been growing at a rate of nearly two percent annually and is expected to reach 210,900 by 2025. In the next ten years, the greatest increase is expected to occur in the 55-64 age range, while the youth population will continue to grow slowly. The Hispanic population has more than doubled in the last ten years and will continue to grow, adding to the City’s diversity. Additional parks, facilities, programs and services will be needed to meet the needs of Eugene’s growing population.
- The Willakenzie and South Eugene sub-areas will contain the largest amount of the future population, but a major shift is not anticipated in population distribution. A balanced and equitable system of parks and facilities will be needed to support all sub-areas in Eugene.
- Residents value an interconnected and accessible park system. Multi-purpose trails are the second most highly used park and community facility, according to the Community Survey. Community members at the Eugene Celebration indicated that multipurpose trails connecting community facilities were the top recreation element most needed in Eugene. The provision of these multi-purpose trails will help reduce the community’s auto-dependency, which is one of the statewide goals identified the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Plan (SCORP).



- Renovating existing parks is a high priority for Eugene residents. Upgrade/complete existing parks ranked number one in desired park improvements, according to the Community Survey, the Speakers Bureau, and the Youth Questionnaire. Increased maintenance is important in addressing a substantial backlog of renovation and restoration needs.
- Most residents are satisfied or very satisfied with the level of maintenance in Eugene's park, open spaces and recreation facilities. The City will face a challenge in the future to protect these assets as a highly-valued community investment, while addressing a decline in maintenance funding.
- Community volunteers are a critical resource for the City, expanding resources for maintenance, environmental restoration, recreation programs, and other activities. The Recreation Providers, Open Space, and Maintenance focus groups all identified a need for more opportunities for volunteerism, particularly for youth.
- Youth development is a high priority for the Eugene community. The Community Survey identified the following age groups as needing more or better recreation services: middle school youth (ages 12 to 14), high school youth (ages 15 to 18), and elementary school youth (ages 6 to 11). Key Stakeholders and the LRCS All-Staff, Recreation Providers, and Multi-Cultural focus groups noted a number of opportunities to expand youth services and cited the benefits of youth development to the community overall.
- The growth of the senior population will increase demand for senior recreation services. In addition, the need for specialized recreation will increase, since people are living longer and the incidence of disability increases with age. By age 65, over 42% of the Eugene population has a disability (U.S. Census, 2000).
- Eugene has a high level of program participation. Well over half (57.2%) of Community Survey respondents have participated in a City of Eugene recreation program or special event during the past year. This is much higher than most communities, where program participation averages about 30% of the population.
- The City of Eugene offers recreation programs and services through the Library, Recreation, and Cultural Services (LRCS) Department and the Parks and Open Space (POS) Division, serving more than 800,000 attendees each year. Aquatics has the highest percentage of total participation, followed by Youth and Family.
- Eugene citizens want the City to continue in its role as a major provider of recreation services. When asked what role the City should have in providing these services, 70.2% of Community Survey respondents said that the City should be a primary provider of services with some services provided by partner agencies.
- Community members think that more recreation programs should be offered. About 61% of Community Survey respondents and over 75% of Speakers Bureau questionnaire respondents said that recreation programs should be increased.
- The benefits most desired by the community can serve as a guide to programming planning and expansion:
  - Provide opportunities to enjoy nature/outdoors;
  - Connect people together, building stronger families and neighborhoods;
  - Protect the natural environment;
  - Improve health and wellness; and
  - Promote youth development.



- Based on anticipated population growth and current demand for services, there are many identified areas of future recreation need, including:
  - Family programs;
  - Special events;
  - Community gardening;
  - Concerts in the parks;
  - Culturally diverse programming;
  - Intergenerational and traditional age-group programming;
  - Active programming for seniors (outdoor/fitness);
  - Afterschool programs for elementary and middle school youth;
  - Outdoor programs;
  - Inclusion support for people with specialized needs;
  - Aquatics programs (swimming instruction, fitness, junior lifeguards, recreational swim);
  - Volunteer programs, such as Volunteer in Parks;
  - Youth mentorship and job training; and
  - Facilities, such as community centers, and staffing to support programming expansions.
  
- The City of Eugene currently maintains about 2,900 acres of parkland at 130 sites, providing a level of service of about 18 acres per 1,000 residents. To meet the needs of residents in 2025, about 1,300 additional parkland acres will be needed. A parkland standard of 20.0 acres per 1000 residents is proposed to provide adequate park, recreation, and open space resources for the future. Connectivity between parks and natural areas should be emphasized.
  
- Parks and natural areas are not equitably distributed throughout the City. Each of the planning areas has assets and deficiencies that will need to be addressed in the PROS plan. Areas that do not have any access to any park type within a half-mile service area should be a high priority for future park acquisition.
  
- In addition to opportunities provided by the City of Eugene, residents have access to recreation facilities owned, managed or maintained by others, including local, state and federal agencies, schools, non-profit organizations, and the private sector. The extent to which the City can work with these agencies to coordinate acquisition, development, use, and maintenance of these facilities will be an important component of Comprehensive Plan recommendations.
  
- New outdoor recreation amenities, natural area amenities, and recreation facilities are needed, and more will be needed to meet community needs in 2025. Outdoor basketball courts, children's play areas, soccer fields, softball/baseball fields, and pedestrian and multiuse trails are needed. In addition, more gymnasiums, swimming pools and community centers will be needed.
  
- The cost of park, recreation, and open space services in Eugene is allocated in the City budget to three different service areas. These include Cultural/Recreation services, Parks and Open Space, Public Buildings and Facilities. The cost of maintaining recreation buildings and facilities is included in each of the three service areas.
  
- The City's allocation to park and recreation services (per capita cost) is about average when compared to other communities studied by MIG (approximately 50 communities).
  
- Due to the passage of the Parks and Open Space bond in 1998, the annual capital budget for parks and open space increased from about \$1 million annually in 1997 to an average of \$5.5 million annually over the last three years.
  
- Other sources of funding include System Development Charges, grants, donations, exchanges of property, and partnerships.



- The total operating budget for park and recreation services in Fiscal Year 2004 is approximately \$12.5 million.
- In FY 04, park and recreation services in Eugene will account for about 3.7% of the City's total operating budget and 10.6% of the General Fund budget.
- The City has passed two local option levies that help fund park and recreation services. These include:
  - Measure 20-37 is a 2-year levy raising approximately \$1.75 million per year.
  - Measure 20-67, passed November 2002, is a 4-year local option levy that will raise approximately \$31.5 million over the four years.

## II. PLANNING AREA

The parks, recreation, and open space planning area for the Eugene PROS Comprehensive Plan extends beyond City limits to include un-annexed areas located throughout River Road/Santa Clara and all areas within the urban growth boundary (UGB). The planning area extends beyond the UGB in places to include several identified opportunity areas for future park and open space decisions.

The study area is divided into six planning sub-areas (Map 1):

- Bethel/Danebo
- City Central
- South Eugene
- River Road/Santa Clara
- Willow Creek
- Willakenzie

Within the UGB, the planning sub-area boundaries follow census block group lines so that census data can be matched to each planning sub-area. Outside the UGB, the planning boundaries follow natural or road features and as close as possible to census tract boundaries.

The City of Eugene provides the majority of parks, facilities, and programs within this planning area, in order to meet the needs of a community with diverse recreational interests—skateboarding, bird-watching, wheelchair basketball, disc-golf, kayaking, dog-walking, roller hockey—not to mention the basics of swimming, soccer, softball, bicycling, and jogging. Today, the City of Eugene manages approximately 2900 acres of land in 130 parks, natural areas and special use facilities and offers a wide variety of recreational programs, special events, and services to people of all ages and abilities.

City residents also benefit from parks and facilities owned or managed by other public agencies within the region. A variety of amenities, trails, and recreation facilities are contributed by these organizations:

- University of Oregon (UO)
- Eugene Water & Electric Bureau (EWEB)
- Lane County Parks
- Lane County Fairgrounds
- River Road Park and Recreation District (RRPRD)
- Willamalane Park & Recreation District



- Eugene 4J School District
- Bethel School District 52
- Army Corps of Engineers
- Bureau of Land Management
- The Nature Conservancy

### III. RELATED PLANNING EFFORTS

Presently, there are several adopted plans and ongoing planning efforts that relate to the Eugene PROS Comprehensive Plan and will be considered as recommendations are developed.

- **Eugene-Springfield Metropolitan Area General Plan and Plan Update:** The City of Eugene, City of Springfield, and Lane County Land Management Division developed the initial plan in 1982 and the update in 1987. This plan is the official long-range general plan of metropolitan Lane County and the cities of Springfield and Eugene. It outlines general planning policies and land use designations.
- **Parks 2005 Plan:** This plan developed by Lane County Parks Division provides an operational, developmental, and financial guide for Lane County Parks from 2000-2005.
- **Metropolitan Natural Resources Study:** A joint project of the City of Eugene, the City of Springfield, and Lane County to address Oregon Statewide Planning Goal 5. Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) manages this project on behalf of the three jurisdictions.
- **Rivers to Ridges Metropolitan Regional Parks and Open Space Study:** Coordinated by LCOG, this effort provides an open space vision and strategic plan for the metro region that considers significant natural resource areas.

Two Eugene planning documents directly relate to the Comprehensive Plan Update. They are:

- The 1989 Eugene Parks and Recreation Plan; and
- The 1996 Parks, Open Spaces, and Natural Areas Study.

Many neighborhood refinement plans and area studies have been considered during the Comprehensive Plan update. The bibliography contains a complete list of documents used in this report.

### IV. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The organizational structure of the City of Eugene and the separation of the park and recreation departments influence the provision of park and recreation services. In Eugene, the City government is administered by a Mayor, City Council, and City Manager. The Mayor presides over City Council meetings and represents the City at meetings and special events. The City Council is the policy-making body of the City. A City Manager is appointed by the Council to perform administrative duties of the City.

Responsibilities for parks, recreation, and open space facilities and programs are divided between the Public Works Department and the Library, Recreation, and Cultural Services Department (Figure 2).



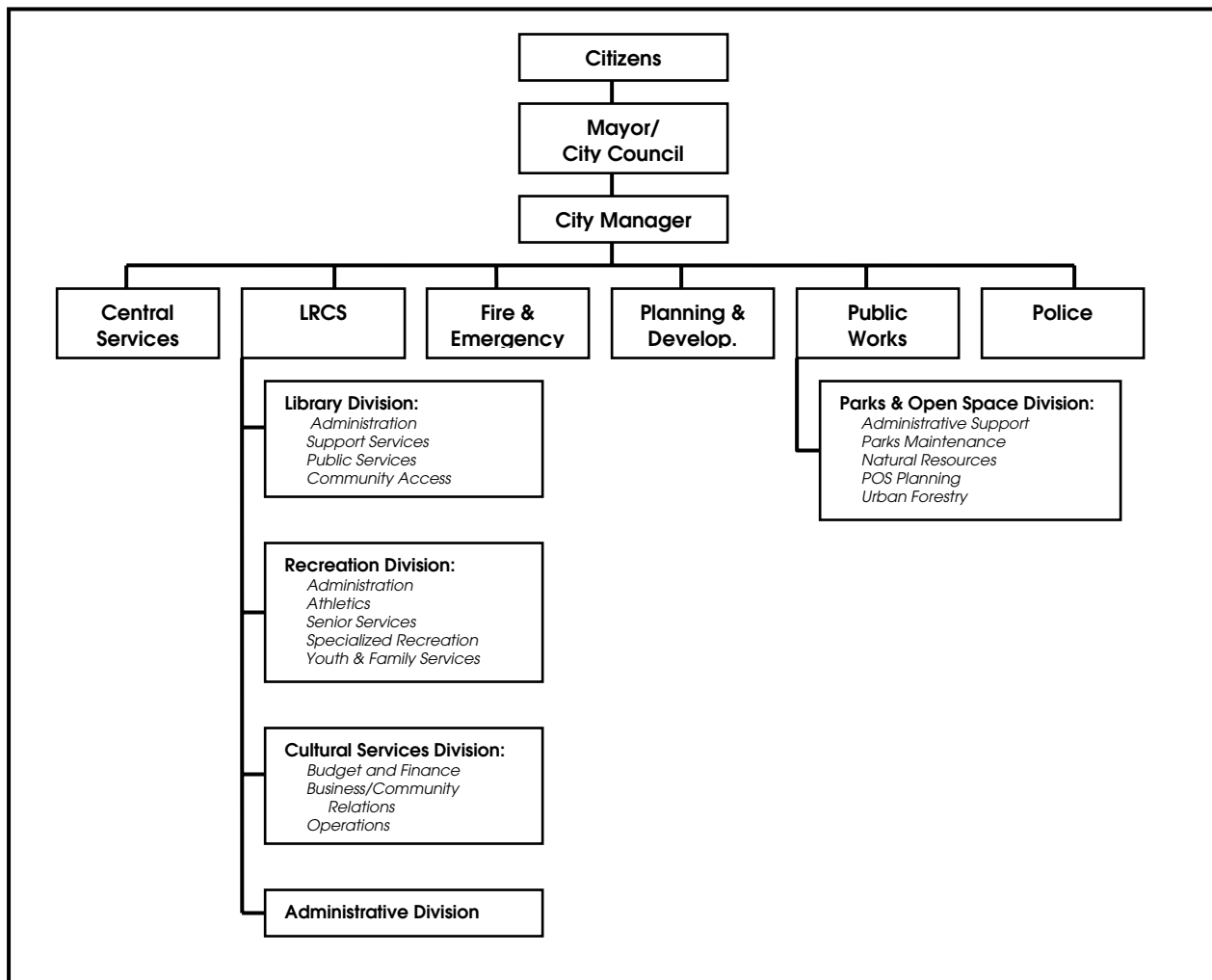
Insert Map 1



[Map 1 back](#)







Source: Parks and Open Space Division, December 2003.

Figure 2: LRCS and POS Organizational Chart

Public Works is headed by a Division Manager who oversees the five sections of the Parks and Open Space Division (POS):

- Administrative Support
- Parks Maintenance
- Natural Resources
- Parks and Open Space Planning
- Urban Forestry

Several popular programs are administered by POS. Park Maintenance oversees the Volunteer in the Parks (VIP) Program, Community Gardens, and NeighborWoods. Stream Team is part of the Open Waterways program within Natural Resources.

Library, Recreation and Cultural Services Department (LRCS) is headed by an Executive Director who oversees four divisions:

- Library Division
- Recreation Division
- Cultural Services Division
- Administration Division

## **V. COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION**

The City of Eugene lies in the center of Lane County, Oregon, nestled between the Cascade Mountains and the Oregon Coast Range in the southern Willamette Valley. Along with Springfield, the city across the Willamette River, Eugene is part of Oregon's second largest metropolitan statistical area with over 275,000 people.

Eugene has been noted for its livability. The scenic location, pleasant climate, recreational opportunities, educational excellence, diverse cultural opportunities, and strong economy have all contributed to make Eugene a great place to live, visit, and recreate.

Known as "The Emerald City," Eugene is rich in natural resources. The City is bordered on three sides by Douglas fir trees, reminiscent of its past reputation as a lumber town. The Willamette River runs on a diagonal course through the center of the City, and the McKenzie River cuts through the corner of northeast Eugene. Together they provide numerous opportunities for river-based recreation. Vistas such as Skinner Butte and Spencer Butte add to the area's visual character. These places also provide important wildlife habitat and are rich in local history. The farmland and forest on the urban fringe add to the local character and increase the community's appeal.

Eugene's location and moderate climate create many opportunities for outdoor recreation. Indoor recreation is popular as well, particularly during the rainy days of winter and spring. Indoor facilities, such as indoor pools and community centers, together with year-round recreation programs, offer recreation opportunities for people of all ages and skill levels.

Two school districts offer both traditional and non-traditional public education at the primary and secondary levels. Eugene has four institutions for higher learning: the University of Oregon (19,000 students), Lane Community College (41,000 students), Northwest Christian College (500 students), and Eugene Bible College (150 students). Some of these institutions provide or partner to provide sports and recreation opportunities. Facilities such as UO's Autzen Stadium, McArthur Court, and Hayward Field attract thousands of fans and host several regional, national, and international sporting events.

The Eugene area is rich in cultural activities and the arts. Each summer, Eugene hosts the internationally-acclaimed Oregon Bach Festival, as well as Art in the Vineyard, the Oregon Festival of American Music, and the Lane County Fair. The Hult Center for the Performing Arts is home to the Eugene Symphony, Eugene Ballet Company, Eugene Concert Choir, Dance Theater of Oregon, Eugene Opera Company, and more. This community also organizes a several fairs and festivals, including the annual Eugene Celebration, Asian Celebration, and Oktoberfest. The Saturday market, Latino Mercado, and Farmers' Market offer unique shopping opportunities.

Eugene represents a community in transition. Since the decline of the timber industry in the 1980's, Eugene's economy has become more diversified, strengthened by development in the high technology sector in 2000. Now there are more than 10,000 businesses in and around Eugene. Of those, government and education provide more than 20,000 jobs. Health care



providers add some 5,000 jobs. In recent years, high-tech companies, such as PSC Scanning and Hynix Semiconductor America, have invested millions of dollars in property, buildings, and equipment and have created thousands of jobs. Eugene's small business community is diverse, supporting a variety of businesses, ranging from specialty retail shops to financial service firms, from management consultancies to ethnic groceries.

According to the Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce, the following top employers in Lane County support more than 1,300 employees each:

- U.S. Government
- University of Oregon
- PeaceHealth Oregon
- Weyerhaeuser Company
- Goodwill Industries
- Lane Community College
- Eugene School District
- Lane County
- Springfield School District
- City of Eugene
- State of Oregon

## **VI. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE**

### **A. Purpose**

The demographic profile provides a snapshot of the community, including population data, projections, and information on age distribution, ethnic composition, education, and income. The profile helps define the customer base for the City's parks, natural areas, facilities, and programs, which will be used in the development of park and recreation strategies and policies.

### **B. Methodology**

A report on the City of Eugene's population, demographic, and economic trends was prepared by LCOG for the PROS Comprehensive Plan Update. This profile was created to help assess community needs associated with parks, recreation, and open space areas. The trends analysis offers insights into population, demographic, and economic changes between 1990 and 2000 with population forecasts to the planning year 2020. Demographic characteristics are also included for the six park planning sub-areas shown on the Planning Sub-areas map (Map 1).

The primary data source for the demographic profile is the 2000 Census of Population and Housing. Other data were taken from population estimates produced by the Population Research Center at Portland State University. Key findings were presented in an Executive Summary (LCOG 2003).

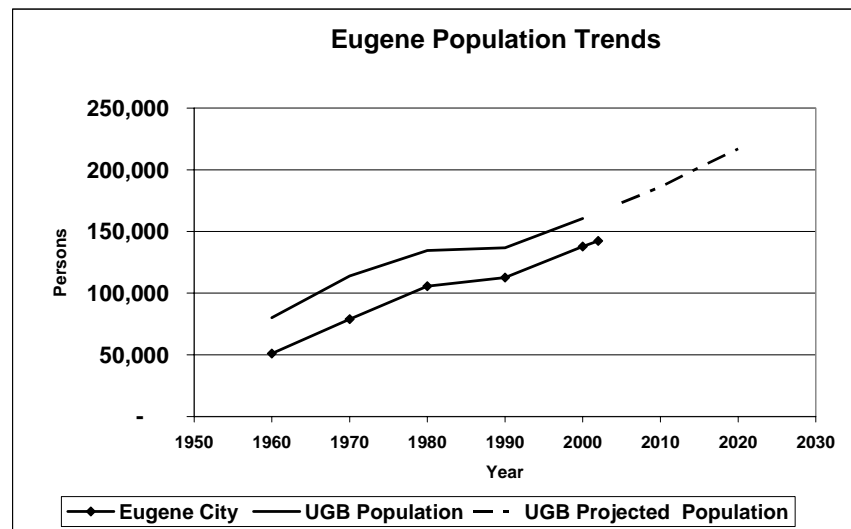


### C. Key Findings

The report contained the following key findings:

#### Population Trends

- The **2002 population** estimate for the City of Eugene is **142,380**, based on estimates by the Population Research Center. This represents an **annual average increase of 1.6 percent** between 2000 and 2002. During the 1990s, the annual average growth rate was 2 percent.
- The Eugene **UGB area population** reached **160,500 in 2000** (Figure 3). This was an annual average population increase of 1.6 percent during the 1990s, which is lower than the state growth rate of 1.9 percent.
- In 1970, the **population within the city limits** was **69 percent** of the total population in the Eugene UGB. By 2000, this percent increased to **86 percent**.
- Growth in the Eugene urban growth boundary has not been uniform. There was population **decline in the Campus, Fairmount, and Friendly** areas during the 1990s. The greatest **growth in the 1990s occurred in the Willakenzie, Bethel and Santa Clara** areas.
- Preliminary population projections for the Eugene UGB forecast an **annual average increase of 1.1%** and an increase of approximately 50,000 people between 2000 and 2025.
- Using the transportation model to allocate future population for the next 20 years, there will be **no major shift in the population distribution**. The Willakenzie and South Eugene sub-areas will continue to contain the largest proportion of the Eugene UGB population (Figure 4).
- City Central area will capture the least amount of the **future population** based on the model results, while the Willakenzie area will capture the largest amount of future population.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Research Center, LCOG

Figure 3: Eugene Population Trends



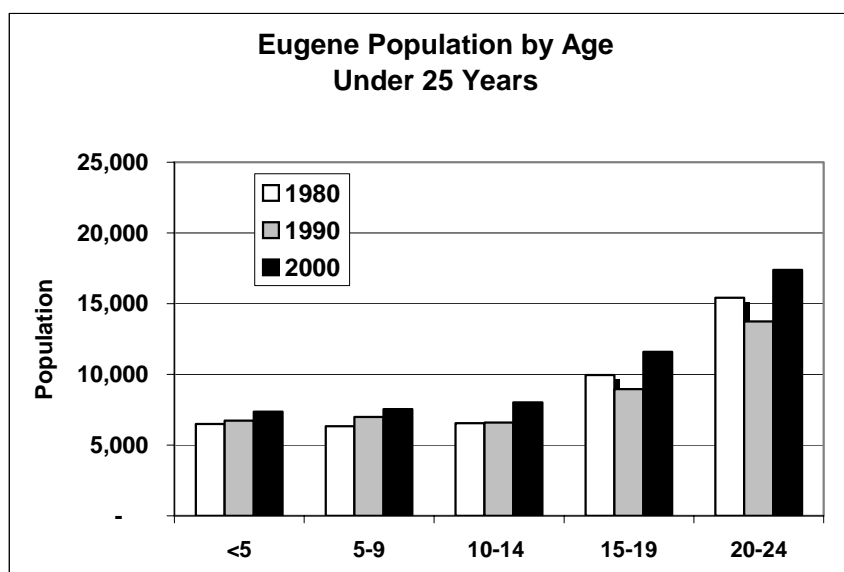
2000 Population and Projected 2025 Population for Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Planning Sub-areas					
Planning Sub-area	2000 Population	Percent of Total Population	Estimated 2025 Population	Percent of Total 2025 Population	Percent Increase
Willakenzie	32,833	20	44,400	21	35%
River Road - Santa Clara	28,536	18	36,200	17	27%
Bethel	24,561	15	34,300	16	40%
City Central	21,844	14	25,400	12	16%
Willow Creek	18,780	12	27,000	13	44%
South	33,915	21	43,600	21	29%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>160,469</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>210,900</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>31%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, LCOG

Figure 4: Population for Planning Sub-areas, 2002 and 2025

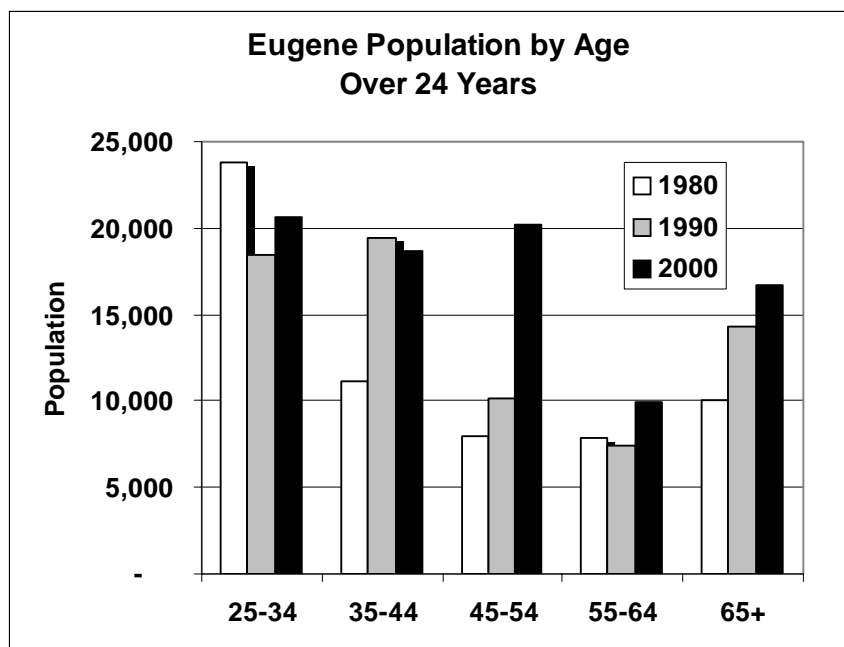
#### Age Distribution

- The **median age** in Eugene **has increased** between 1980 and 2000 **from 27.9 to 33.0**. Eugene has a lower median age than both the state and the nation primarily due to the college age population.
- While the **number of persons 18 and under increased 18.6 percent** between 1980 and 2000, this growth was slower than the population as a whole (Figure 5).
- The **adult population aged 45 – 54 years experienced the largest increase** between 1990 and 2000 as the baby boom generation aged into this age cohort (Figure 6).
- **Persons under 15 years were 17 percent** of the Eugene UGB population. In the Bethel, River Road/Santa Clara, and Willow Creek sub-areas, the proportion was higher.
- **Persons aged 60 years and over were 15 percent** of the Eugene UGB population. In Willakenzie, persons 60+ were 20 percent of the sub-area population.
- In the next ten years, it is anticipated that the **youth population will continue to grow slowly**. The elderly population will also grow but not as quickly. The **greatest increase will be in the 55 to 64 age group** as the leading edge of the baby boomers enter this age category.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, LCOG

Figure 5: Eugene Population by Age, Under 25 Years



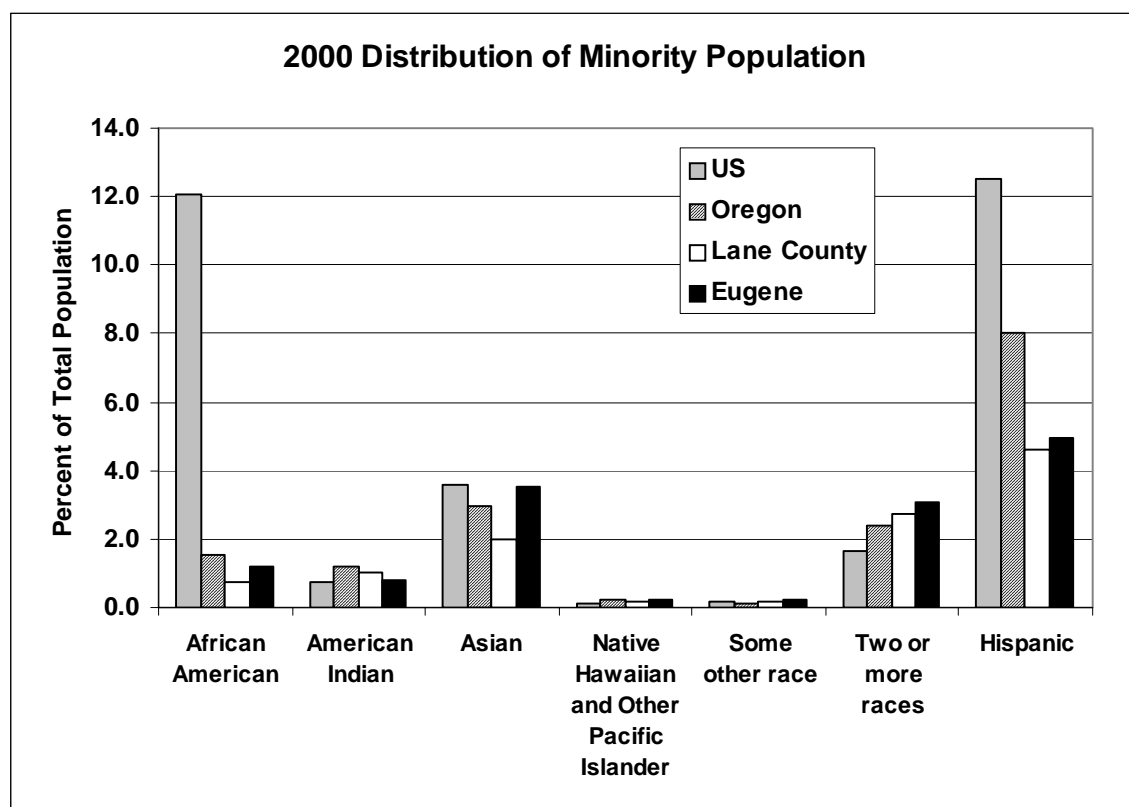
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, LCOG

Figure 6: Eugene Population by Age, Over 25 Years



### Race and Ethnic Population Distribution

- Based on 2000 Census data, Eugene remains a predominately **White, non-Hispanic community**.
- Citywide, the **Hispanic/Latino population was 5 percent of the total population** (Figure 7). There were a number of block groups in which the Hispanic/Latino population was higher than the citywide percent. These block groups tended to be located in the Bethel Triangle, central Whiteaker and Westside areas.
- The **Hispanic population** in Eugene **more than doubled** during the 1990s, increasing by 3,792 persons.
- Persons who identified themselves as **Asian were the second largest minority population** in Eugene, with 3.5 percent of the total 2000 Eugene population (Figure 7). In several census block groups associated with the University of Oregon, Asians were greater than 10 percent of the population.
- Persons who identified themselves as **African American, American Indian and Pacific Islander or Native Hawaiian** alone were dispersed throughout the Eugene area.
- Within Eugene, **90 percent** of the population over 5 years of age **spoke English** at home. Of the 13,102 persons 5 years and older who spoke a language other than English at home, 37 percent, or 4,836 people, spoke English less than “very well”. Approximately 47 percent of the persons who spoke English less than “very well” spoke Spanish, 37 percent spoke an Asian or Pacific Island language, and 15 percent spoke some other language.



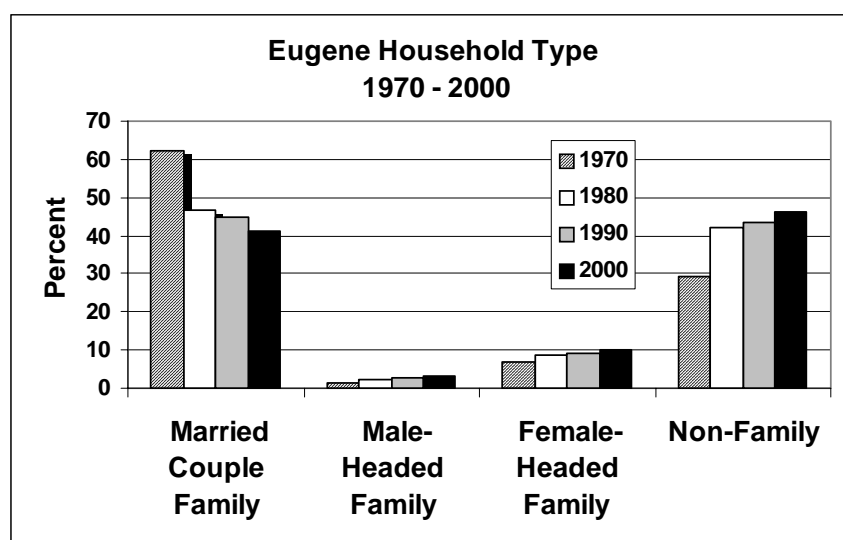
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, LCOG

Figure 7: 2000 Distribution of Minority Population



### Household Composition

- The composition of Eugene's households has changed over the last 30 years (Figure 8). **Married couple families decreased** while single-headed families and non-families, **primarily single person households increased**.
- The changing composition of households resulted in **a decrease in the average number of persons per household** from 2.7 in 1970 to 2.27 in 2000. Average household size is anticipated to continue to decline but at a more gradual rate.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, LCOG

Figure 8: Eugene Household Type, 1970 - 2000

### Educational Attainment

- Approximately **37 percent of Eugene adults had completed a bachelor's or higher degree** in 2000. This percentage was higher than the county, state or national percentages.

### Income Characteristics

- Local median **household income still lags behind national and state levels**, although the gap is shrinking (Figure 9).
- Eugene's **median family income** was only **slightly below the state median**.
- The proportion of **persons living below the poverty level increased slightly** between 1989 and 1999 in Eugene (Figure 10). Eugene continues to have a **higher poverty rate** than the county, state or nation.
- While for the county, state, and nation, those under 18 years of age had a greater proportion of persons below poverty, in Eugene, those aged between **18 to 64 years had the greatest proportion below the poverty level** in 1999 (Figure 11).





Income in 1999		
Area	Median Household Income	Median Family Income
U.S.	\$41,994	\$50,046
Oregon	\$40,916	\$48,680
Lane County	\$36,942	\$45,111
<b>Eugene</b>	<b>\$35,850</b>	<b>\$48,527</b>

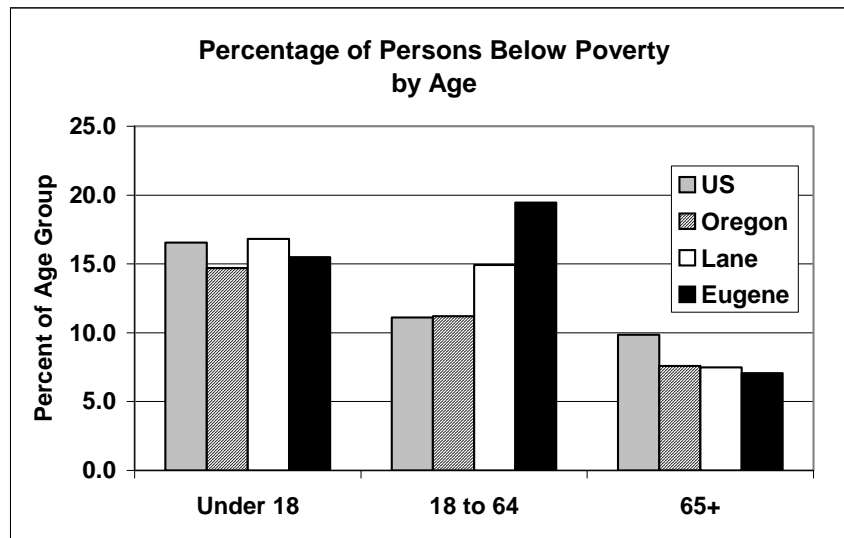
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, LCOG

Figure 9: Income in 1999

Percentage of Persons Below Poverty			
Area	1980	1990	2000
U.S.	12.4	13.1	12.4
Oregon	10.7	12.4	11.6
Lane	12.8	14.5	14.4
<b>Eugene</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>17.0</b>	<b>17.1</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, LCOG

Figure 10: Percentage of Persons Below Poverty



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, LCOG

Figure 11: Percentage of Persons Below Poverty by Age

## VII. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT FINDINGS

This section contains an overview of each of the public involvement programs and their key findings.

### A. Introduction

Public involvement was a critical part of the comprehensive planning process. To develop a solid foundation for the City of Eugene Parks, Recreation and Open Space Comprehensive Plan, feedback was solicited from City staff and residents regarding their needs and preferences. Public involvement activities were planned to ensure the participation of a diverse cross-section of staff and the City's population.

### B. Methodology

The public involvement process during the community needs assessment included the following:

- **Community Survey:** A community survey was conducted to assess public attitudes, recreation interests, recreation participation, and opinions on maintenance and financial issues. It included data on current participation in 50 recreation activities as well as data on preferences for recreation participation. A comparison of current recreation participation and recreation preferences helps identify activities that have significant differences between desired participation and current participation. The data are based upon a survey sample of 437.
- **Youth Questionnaire:** Like the Community Survey, the Youth Questionnaire included data on current participation as well as demand for recreation activities. A total of 647 questionnaires were completed.
- **Eugene Celebration Questionnaire:** This report included the results of 456 questionnaires completed during this annual event.
- **Speakers Bureau Questionnaire:** This report included the input received from 44 staff presentations to community groups and organizations. A total of 1085 community members attended the presentations and 751 completed questionnaires.
- **Organized Sports Questionnaire:** A questionnaire was sent out to representatives from 21 organizations; 15 sports providers responded or were interviewed by telephone.
- **Focus Groups** (LRCS All Staff, Maintenance Staff, Recreation and Social Service Providers, Natural Resource and Open Space, Multi-cultural, LRCS Communities of Color, Business Community): A total of 179 participated in PROS plan focus groups.
- **Stakeholder Interviews:** Twelve community leaders identified by the City were interviewed.
- Formal and informal staff interviews.

Table 1 provides a summary of participation in the public involvement programs.

### C. Community Survey

#### *Overview*

The Community Survey validated key plan findings among a statistically representative sample of residents in Eugene. It also included residents who otherwise may not have participated in the Comprehensive Plan update. Community Survey questions focused on public attitudes, recreation interests, recreation participation characteristics, maintenance and financial issues.



Public Involvement Program	Number of Participants
Speakers Bureau	1085
Youth Questionnaire	647
Eugene Celebration	456
Community Survey	437
Communities of Color	43
Natural Resource & Open Space	38
LRCs All-staff Workshop	36
Maintenance Staff	28
Organized Sports Providers	21
Recreation & Service Providers	21
Business Community	13
Stakeholder Interviews	12
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2837</b>

Table 1: Public Involvement Participants

Members of the 20-30 Club distributed questionnaires to randomly selected households in the Eugene planning area during January 2003. Each household member aged ten and over was asked to fill out a questionnaire. The survey was designed to achieve statistical reliability for the Eugene planning area. For the total sample, the 437 responses exceeded the minimum needed to achieve a 95% confidence level with a margin of error no greater than 5%.

#### *Key Findings*

The following key findings emerged from the survey:

- More than 94% of survey participants believe parks, recreation services and open space are **very important** or **important** to Eugene's quality of life.
- The most important benefit of parks, recreation services, and open spaces identified by respondents was: **provide opportunities to enjoy nature/outdoors**.
- Over half (57.2%) of survey respondents **have participated in a City of Eugene recreation program or special event during the past year**. This is much higher than the average of other communities surveyed by MIG.
- The highest percent of survey respondents (30.9%) learn about City of Eugene programs and special events through **the Recreation Program Guide**, followed by **friends or word of mouth** (28%) and **the local newspaper** (25.1%).
- When asked what role is most appropriate for the City to play in providing recreation services, the highest percentage of adult respondents (70.2%) say the City should be a **primary provider of services**, with some **services provided by partner agencies**.



- About 60% of survey respondents said certain groups in the City of Eugene need **more or better** recreation services. The groups in need of more or better recreation services, according to survey respondents are: **middle school youth 12 to 14 years of age** (17.5%), **high school youth 15 to 18 years of age** (15.8%), and **elementary school youth 6 to 11 years of age** (13.1%).
- About 60% of survey respondents think recreation programs should be **increased**. The two top choices for increased recreation programs are **special events** (23.6%) and **outdoor /environmental programs** (18.0%). **Before and after school programs, competitive or recreational sports, and the arts** (performing, visual, cultural) also were selected by over 10% of the respondents as programs they would like to see increased.
- Over 77% of respondents thought Eugene's parks can be **improved**. The top two improvements were **upgrade/ complete existing parks** (30.5%) and **develop additional smaller, close-to-home neighborhood parks** (25.3%). **Acquiring parkland for future development** (16.8%) and **developing more, large, multi-use community parks** (13.9%) were also frequently selected.
- Over 65% of respondents thought Eugene's natural areas can be **improved**. The top priorities were: **provide more passive recreation opportunities, such as trails and benches** (27.1%); **improve habitat in existing natural areas and remove invasive species** (23.2%); and **acquire more natural areas** (21.3%).
- Eugene residents prefer a diverse park system that provides **a balance of active and natural area parks**. When asked what is the right proportion of parks for Eugene, more than half (51.8%) of survey respondents said there should be **an equal distribution of natural areas and active parks**.
- Over 58% of respondents thought that Eugene needs **more recreation elements**, such as recreation centers, pools, play areas, sport fields, etc. According to survey respondents, the top two outdoor recreation facilities needed in Eugene today are: **multipurpose trails connecting community facilities for biking, walking, etc.** (26.9%); and **river access for recreation, swimming and boating** (14.0%).
- **Multi-use community center** and a **teen center** were ranked as the top recreation-related buildings most needed in Eugene.
- The two most needed sport facilities in Eugene are: **a sports complex** (24.7%) and **a swimming pool** (20.6%).
- The parks and community facilities that had the highest frequency of use by respondents were (in order of frequency) **neighborhood parks, multi-purpose trails, community parks, metropolitan parks and school playgrounds**.
- More than 82% of survey respondents are **satisfied** or **very satisfied** with the level of maintenance in Eugene's park, open spaces and recreation facilities.
- When asked to identify the three parks, recreation and open space improvements most needed in Eugene today, **improving existing parks** (30.0%) was most frequently selected by participants. **Acquiring land and developing new parks and natural areas** (13.0%), **providing other recreation facilities** (11.0%) and **improving and expanding the trail system** (9.0%) also were frequently selected.
- The top five current recreation activities (in order) are: **watching TV/video, computers, reading for pleasure, walking for pleasure, exercise/aerobics** (Table 2).
- The top five preferred recreation activities if facilities were available are: **bicycling for pleasure, attend concerts, camping, indoor swimming, outdoor swimming** (Table 3).



Rank	Activity	City of Eugene	Willamalane P & R District	MIG Average
1	Watching TV/Video	3.92		3.92
2	Computers (personal)	3.70		6.47
3	Reading for Pleasure	3.52		7.83
4	Walking for Pleasure	3.22	5.67	5.37
5	Exercising/Aerobics	2.96	3.54	3.41
6	Family activities	2.48	4.57	3.60
7	Gardening	2.37	4.58	3.99
8	Dog Walking	2.36	4.77	4.77
9	Bicycling for Pleasure	2.25	3.91	2.93
10	Playground (visit/play)	2.09	3.13	2.63
11	Wildlife Watching	2.08	2.19	2.16
12	Jogging/Running	2.06	2.04	2.49
13	Hiking/Backpacking	1.95	2.19	2.02
14	Fairs and Festivals	1.91	2.65	2.21
15	Bird Watching/Feeding	1.88	2.23	1.62
16	Concerts (attend)	1.88	1.97	1.94
17	Camping (general)	1.80		2.60
18	Arts and Crafts	1.79		1.81
19	Cultural Events (attend)	1.78		1.35
20	Bicycling (commute)	1.77		0.99
21	Picnicking	1.77	2.54	2.02
22	Gourmet Cooking	1.73		1.68
23	Swimming (outdoor)	1.71	2.62	2.50
24	Photography	1.68	1.64	1.56
25	Musical Instrument (playing)	1.64		1.61
26	Swimming (indoor)	1.60	2.95	2.20
27	Basketball	1.58	2.60	2.26
28	Golf (play)	1.48	1.21	1.44
29	Soccer	1.46	1.35	1.72
30	Fishing (freshwater)	1.45	2.86	1.84
31	Football	1.41	1.96	1.54
32	Dancing (social)	1.35	1.31	1.02
33	River Rafting	1.32		0.76
34	Baseball (youth)	1.31	1.11	1.49
35	Softball	1.29	0.84	1.37
36	Canoe/Kayak	1.25	0.62	0.74
37	Roller Skating/In-Line Skating	1.25	1.05	1.20
38	Disc Frisbee Golf	1.22		1.22
39	Dancing (ballet, tap, etc.)	1.21	0.61	0.58
40	Tennis	1.21	0.54	1.09
41	Volleyball (outdoor/sand)	1.18	0.39	0.88
42	Drama (participate)	1.16		0.66
43	Skiing (cross country)	1.16		0.07
44	Ice Skating (indoor)	1.15	0.34	0.51
45	Gymnastics	1.14	0.44	0.35
46	Rock Climbing	1.14		0.66
47	Volleyball (indoor)	1.14	0.68	0.92
48	Bicycling (BMX)	1.12	0.96	0.90
49	Ultimate Frisbee	1.12		1.12
50	Skateboarding	1.10	1.31	0.83

Table 2: Participation Rates for Recreation Activities in the Eugene Community



*Notes about Table 2:*

- The table includes participation rates for both indoor and outdoor activities. The participation rate refers to the average number of times each person participated in the activity during a 30-day period when the activity is in season.
- MIG has accumulated recreation participation information on communities throughout the Northwest. The MIG AVERAGE is the average of the last 15 communities surveyed. It can be used to determine where specific activities are above or below the norm.
- Survey results for the Willamalane Park and Recreation District also are given where similar activities were listed.
- Source: *Community Survey Report*.

Preferred Ranking	Activity	Weighted Score	Current Participation Ranking
1	Bicycling for Pleasure	785	21
2	Walking for Pleasure	641	4
3	Concerts (attend)	639	17
4	Gardening	625	7
5	Exercising/Aerobics	553	5
6	Hiking/Backpacking	539	13
7	Fairs and Festivals	515	15
8	Family Activities	503	6
9	Camping (general)	482	18
10	Arts and Crafts	428	19
11	Cultural Events (attend)	419	20
12	Reading for Pleasure	397	3
13	Swimming (indoor)	384	27
14	Swimming (outdoor)	333	24
15	Dog Walking	327	8
16	Jogging/Running	294	12
17	Wildlife Watching	288	11
18	Playground (visit/play)	257	10
19	Basketball	249	28
20	Computers (personal)	231	2

Table 3: The Top Ranking Preferred Activities in the Eugene Community

*Notes about Table 3:*

- Respondents were asked to rank their top ten preferred activities if facilities were available. The activity rankings were then scored with a weighted value by giving a first choice a value of ten, a second choice a value of nine, etc. The total weighted score was then calculated for each activity. The 20 highest-ranking activities are shown. The weighted score is shown only for ranking purposes.
- The first column lists the activity the respondent would most like to do if facilities were available, in their ranked order. The last column lists the current participation ranking. The difference between what residents are currently doing (column 4) and what they would like to be doing (column 1) is called the latent demand. The greater the two numbers vary from each other, the greater the latent demand. Activities with a latent demand value of 10 or greater are screened.
- Source: *Community Survey Report*.



## D. Youth Questionnaire

### *Overview*

The Youth Questionnaire solicited feedback on youth participation in existing parks and recreation programs, youth preferences, and their ideas for improvements. A total of 647 questionnaires were completed by students from 10 local High Schools and Middle Schools, including: South Eugene High School, Sheldon High School, North Eugene High School, Churchill High School, Cal Young Middle School, Meadowview Middle School, Roosevelt Middle School, Jefferson Middle School, Kennedy Middle School, and Spencer Butte Middle School. Because the questionnaire was not administered to a random sample of youth, the data from the questionnaire cannot be used to make generalizations about the entire youth population. The data are unique to the respondents who completed the questionnaire.

### *Key Findings*

The following key findings emerged from the questionnaire:

- The parks and community facilities that had the highest frequency of use by youth respondents were (in order of frequency) **neighborhood parks, swimming pools, community parks, metropolitan parks, and multi-purpose trails**.
- **Not enough time** (31.4%), **inconvenient locations (too far away)** (15.0%), and **a lack of adequate things to do** (14.2%) were cited as the most significant reasons for not using parks and facilities.
- Nearly one-fourth of respondents (23.2%) felt that **improving existing parks** would best meet their recreation needs. **Developing more neighborhood parks** (16.6%), **developing more multi-use community parks** (15.7%), and **improving habitat in natural areas** (15.8%) also were selected frequently.
- The three types of recreation facilities most needed by youth in Eugene are **river access** (16.3%), **commercial entertainment** (14.8%), and **skateparks** (13.4%).
- The highest percent of questionnaire respondents indicated that **swimming pools** (24.2%) were the most needed type of sport facility. A **sports complex** (14.8%) and **outdoor basketball courts** (14.7%) also were noted frequently.
- Over one-third of respondents (37.2%) **participated in a City-sponsored recreation program or special event**, while 31.2% did not, and 31.6% did not know.
- **Competitive and recreational sports** (20.3%) and **special events** (20.1%), such as dances, concerts in the park, and festivals, are the most needed recreational activities by youth in Eugene.
- Nearly one-third (31.8%) of respondents indicated that they would be most comfortable attending recreation activities at **school**, followed by **community centers** (23.7%) and **teen centers** (20.3%).
- The top five activities in which youth participate are (in order) **watching TV/videos, computers, reading, playing a musical instrument, and basketball** (Table 4).
- The top five activities that teens would like to do if facilities were available are (in order) **basketball, bicycling, watching TV, computers, and camping** (Table 5).



Rank	Activity	Youth Results	City of Eugene	MIG Average
1	Watching TV/Video	14.45	3.92	3.92
2	Computers (personal)	10.94	3.70	6.47
3	Reading for Pleasure	8.13	3.52	7.83
4	Musical Instrument (playing)	7.38	1.64	1.61
5	Basketball	7.10	1.58	2.26
6	Exercising/Aerobics	6.31	2.96	3.41
7	Jogging/Running	6.27	2.06	2.49
8	Swimming (outdoor)	6.21	1.71	2.50
9	Bicycling for Pleasure	6.04	2.25	2.93
10	Family activities	5.04	2.48	3.60
11	Walking for Pleasure	4.83	3.22	5.37
12	Swimming (indoor)	4.79	1.60	2.20
13	Dog Walking	4.45	2.36	4.77
14	Soccer	4.18	1.46	1.72
15	Football	3.99	1.41	1.54
16	Playground (visit/play)	3.73	2.09	2.63
17	Concerts (attend)	3.32	1.88	1.94
18	Camping (general)	3.24	1.80	2.60
19	Wildlife Watching	3.17	2.08	2.16
20	Photography	3.12	1.68	1.56
21	Fairs and Festivals	3.11	1.91	2.21
22	Arts and Crafts	2.95	1.79	1.81
23	Skateboarding	2.90	1.10	0.83
24	Bicycling (commute)	2.79	1.77	0.99
25	Gourmet Cooking	2.74	1.73	1.68
26	Dancing (social)	2.73	1.35	1.02
27	Hiking/Backpacking	2.63	1.95	2.02
28	Tennis	2.56	1.21	1.09
29	Fishing (freshwater)	2.46	1.45	1.84
30	Baseball (youth)	2.35	1.31	1.49
31	Roller Skating/In-Line Skating	2.29	1.25	1.20
32	Bicycling (BMX)	2.09	1.12	0.90
33	Drama (participate)	2.05	1.16	0.66
34	Picnicking	2.01	1.77	2.02
35	Golf (play)	2.01	1.48	1.44
36	Gardening	1.97	2.37	3.99
37	Rock Climbing	1.91	1.14	0.66
38	Cultural Events (attend)	1.79	1.78	1.35
39	Volleyball (indoor)	1.78	1.14	0.92
40	Dancing (ballet, tap, etc.)	1.76	1.21	0.58
41	River Rafting	1.74	1.32	0.76
42	Ice Skating (indoor)	1.50	1.15	0.51
43	Softball	1.46	1.29	1.37
44	Volleyball (outdoor/sand)	1.45	1.18	0.88
45	Gymnastics	1.37	1.14	0.35
46	Disc Frisbee Golf	1.28	1.22	1.22
47	Canoe/Kayak	1.16	1.25	0.74
48	Skiing (cross country)	1.09	1.16	0.07
49	Ultimate Frisbee	1.00	1.12	1.12
50	Bird Watching/Feeding	.96	1.88	1.62

Table 4: Youth Participation Rates for Recreation Activities





*Notes about Table 4:*

- The table includes youth participation rates for both indoor and outdoor activities. The rate refers to the average number of times each youth participated in the activity during a 30-day period when the activity is in season.
- MIG has accumulated recreation participation information on communities throughout the Northwest. The MIG AVERAGE is the average of the last 15 communities surveyed. It can be used to determine where specific activities are above or below the norm.
- Source: *Youth Questionnaire Report*.

Preferred Ranking	Activity	Weighted Score	Current Participation Ranking
1	Basketball	1243	5
2	Bicycling for Pleasure	832	9
3	Watching TV	789	1
4	Computers (personal)	762	2
5	Camping (general)	726	18
6	Concerts (attend)	709	17
7	Football	701	15
8	Rock climbing	652	37
9	Fairs and Festivals	611	21
10	Dancing (social)	576	26
11	Jogging/Running	562	7
12	Photography	537	20
13	Musical Instrument (playing)	514	4
14	Reading for Pleasure	476	3
15	River Rafting	475	41
16	Hiking/Backpacking	461	27
17	Soccer	460	14
18	Fishing (freshwater)	444	29
19	Canoe/Kayak	430	47
20	Arts and Crafts	419	22

Table 5: The Top Ranking Preferred Activities for Youth

*Notes about Table 5:*

- Respondents were asked to rank their top ten preferred activities if facilities were available. The activity rankings were then scored with a weighted value by giving a first choice a value of ten, a second choice a value of nine, etc. The total weighted score was then calculated for each activity. The 20 highest-ranking activities are shown. The weighted score is shown only for ranking purposes.
- The first column lists the activity the respondent would most like to do if facilities were available, in their ranked order. The last column lists the current participation ranking. The difference between what residents are currently doing (column 4) and what they would like to be doing (column 1) is called the latent demand. The greater the two numbers vary from each other, the greater the latent demand. Activities with a latent demand value of 10 or greater are screened.
- Source: *Youth Questionnaire Report*.
- Nine of the top 20 preferred activities have a significant latent demand—a difference between what youth are currently doing and what they would like to be doing. This difference may be attributed to a lack of facilities or recreational opportunities in **camping, concerts, rock climbing, festivals, dancing, river rafting, hiking/backpacking, fishing, and canoeing/kayaking**.



## E. Eugene Celebration Questionnaire

### *Overview*

The Eugene Celebration exhibit was part of an extensive public involvement effort to involve Eugene residents who otherwise may not have participated in the Comprehensive Plan update. Display boards provided information about City of Eugene parks, recreation and open spaces and aided participants in completing a brief questionnaire. The questionnaire focused on park, open space and recreation program and facility improvements.

Four hundred fifty-six questionnaires were completed during the Eugene Celebration. Because the questionnaire was not administered to a random sample of residents, the data from the questionnaire cannot be used to make generalizations about the entire population. This data is unique to the respondents who completed the questionnaire at the Eugene Celebration.

### *Key Findings*

The following key findings emerged from the survey:

- The majority of respondents feel that parks, recreation services and open space are **very important** to Eugene's quality of life (81%).
- **Providing opportunities to enjoy nature/outdoors** (35.8%), **protecting the natural environment** (27.2%), and **connecting people together** (13.3%) were identified as the three most important benefits of parks, open space and recreation services.
- **Purchasing more natural areas** (21.1%), **developing additional smaller, close-to-home parks** (20.6%) and **upgrading/completing existing parks** (19.2%) were identified as the most important improvements to parks and open space.
- Generally, residents **prefer a park system that is slightly more natural than active**, when finding a balance between parks with natural open space versus developed recreational use.
- Residents feel our **current park system is slightly more active than natural**, in the amount of parks with natural open space versus developed recreational use.
- The top priorities for natural areas were identified as **acquiring more natural areas** (28.6%) and **improving habitat in existing areas** (28.2%).
- **Areas along rivers and creeks** (35.5%), **wetlands** (23.5%), and **forested areas** (22.6%) were identified by participants as the types of habitats that should be acquired and protected in Eugene.
- Respondents identified **teenagers** (ages 14-19) and **middle school youth** (ages 11-13) as the groups needing more or better recreation services in Eugene.
- Respondents included **multipurpose trails connecting community facilities** (32.7%) and **river access for recreation, swimming and boating** (20.9%) as the top two recreation elements most needed in Eugene.
- Participants rated relatively highly the **current condition of parks, open space, and recreation facilities**. Over 50% of the participants rated it a "4" on a scale of 1-5, with "1" signifying low quality and "5" high quality.
- Participants noted that they were reasonably satisfied with **parks, open space, and facility maintenance**. Nearly 47% of the participants rated it a "4" on a scale of 1-5, with "1" signifying dissatisfied and "5" satisfied.
- Overall, participants were **pleased** with the Comprehensive Plan exhibit at the Eugene Celebration. Almost 47% of the participants rated it a "4" on a scale of 1-5, with "1" signifying needing improvement and "5" as excellent.



## F. Speakers Bureau Questionnaire

### Overview

City staff made 44 presentations to various community groups in Eugene between November 2002 and April 2003. Their goal was to obtain members' perceptions about recreation opportunities and to solicit ideas regarding future park and facility improvements. In total, 1085 people attended these presentations. Attendees were asked to fill out a questionnaire. A total of 751 completed questionnaires were received. Because the questionnaire was not administered to a random sample of respondents, the data from the questionnaire cannot be used to make generalizations about the entire population. The data are unique to the respondents who completed the questionnaire.

### Key Findings

The following key findings emerged from the questionnaire:

- Over 99% of respondents feel that **parks, recreation services and open space** are **very important** or **important** to Eugene's quality of life.
- Nearly 98% of respondents believe that parks, open spaces, and recreation services provide **benefits** to the community. These benefits include: **provide opportunities to enjoy nature/outdoors** (25.9%), **connect people together, building stronger families and neighborhoods** (13.3%), and **protect the natural environment** (13.1%).
- Seventy-seven percent of respondents believe that the City of Eugene should be a **provider** of recreation services, not a facilitator or a referral agency.
- Respondents identified the following as the top three groups in need of more or better recreation services: **middle school youth 12-14** (14.9%), **high school youth 15-18** (14.0%), and **seniors 55 and over** (12.5%).
- Over 75% of respondents would like to see recreation programs increased, including **outdoor/environmental programs** (23.1%), **special events** (17.2%), and **before and after school programs** (15.5%).
- Eugene's parks can be improved by **upgrading/completing existing parks** (28.3%), **acquiring parkland for future development** (24.9%), and **developing additional smaller, close-to-home neighborhood parks** (22.1%).
- According to respondents, the top two priorities for improving Eugene's natural areas are **acquiring more natural areas** (24.9%) and **improving habitat in existing natural areas and removing invasive species** (23.7%).
- Sixty-four percent of respondents think that Eugene needs more recreation elements. In open-ended responses, the following facilities were listed most frequently: **outdoor aquatic facilities, including swimming pools and spray parks** (106), **multi-use trails** (76), **disc golf** (56), and **indoor swimming pools** (51).
- Over 85% of respondents were **satisfied** or **very satisfied** with the level of park, open space, and facility maintenance.
- According to the comments in open-ended responses, the three most needed improvements to parks, open space, and recreation include: **improve existing parks and open space** (308), **provide additional parks and open space** (213), and **improve/provide additional recreation programs** (148).



## G. Organized Sports Questionnaire

### *Overview*

In April 2003, a questionnaire inquiring about sports activities, trends, and needs was distributed to twenty-one groups providing organized sports, including the City of Eugene and local high schools. The groups were identified by the City of Eugene as organizations or agencies that use sports fields and gymnasiums. Of the twenty-one groups that were contacted, completed questionnaires or telephone responses were received from fifteen.

### *Key Findings*

The following key findings emerged from the questionnaire:

- There is a **wide variety of organized sports** in the Eugene area, ranging from more traditional sports such as baseball and soccer to less common activities, such as lacrosse, water polo, and rugby.
- **More** sports opportunities are available **for youth** than for adults.
- The City of Eugene provides a **variety of City-sponsored adult sports programs**. Many cities provide adult basketball and softball, and adult volleyball is also fairly common. Eugene also provides adult soccer and Ultimate Frisbee.
- High schools provide a **wide range of sports activities for youth**.
- There are many opportunities to participate in **youth soccer** in Eugene. This sport has the most recreation providers (9), including 5 high schools and 4 private organizations.
- There are also many opportunities to participate in **youth baseball** in Eugene. There are 8 providers, including 5 high schools and 3 private organizations.
- Most of the privately run groups indicated **a need for more fields and gymnasiums**.
  - Improvements to existing fields;
  - Development of a sports field complex;
  - More fields for soccer, rugby, baseball, softball; and
  - More gymnasiums or a field house.
- Overall, the respondents reported **growth in organized sports participation**.
- Many groups suggested **ways to partner with the City**, including managing facilities, providing volunteers, and doing field maintenance. Other ideas for partnerships included marketing, coordination of field assignments, and sharing costs.

## H. LRCS All Staff Workshop

### *Overview*

The Library, Recreation and Cultural Services (LRCS) Department gathered on January 21, 2003, at the Hillyard Community Center for an all-staff workshop. Thirty-six staff attended the workshop, and 21 submitted written comments.

Staff broke into five small groups for discussion, facilitated by MIG and Parks and Open Space Division (POS) staff. Each small group discussed the following topics:

- **Vision and Values:** If you overheard a customer talking about the City's parks, LRCS services and open space 10 years from now, what would you want to hear?



- **Service Strengths:** What does the City do particularly well in providing recreation and cultural services?
- **Service Improvements:** What parks, recreation and cultural service, and open space improvements are needed?
- **Priority Issues:** What are the three top priority improvements that you have identified in your discussion?

### *Key Findings*

The following key findings emerged from the workshop and written comments:

- The staff's **vision and values for the future** of City parks, LCRS services, and open space include:
  - Safe, clean, well-maintained and environmentally friendly parks and facilities;
  - Geographically, economically, and physically accessible parks and recreation opportunities;
  - Diverse, community-based programs (age, cultures, abilities, languages); and
  - Excellent customer service.
- The City's **service strengths** include:
  - Program variety and diversity;
  - Specific programs, including the Hult Center and summer concerts, specialized recreation and inclusion services, outdoor programs and youth programs;
  - Park and facility maintenance;
  - Outstanding recreation opportunities and cultural facilities (Library, Amazon pool, Hult Center, bike/jogging paths);
  - Affordability, despite budget cuts;
  - Responsiveness to customers and community need; and
  - Excellent, professional, committed staff.
- The following **service improvements** are needed in parks, recreation and cultural services, and open space:
  - Renovate existing parks and facilities, including Echo Hollow and Sheldon Pools;
  - Build more pools and expand hours;
  - Develop neighborhood-based community centers for all ages and abilities;
  - Provide adequately distributed parks and open space to serve all areas of the City;
  - Develop additional park amenities, such as water spray parks, trails, and restrooms;
  - Build a City-owned sports complex to provide more sports opportunities;
  - Offer more diverse, accessible, and affordable programs, including adult programs;
  - Make outdoor/environmental programs more affordable;
  - Plan more special events (concerts/festivals);
  - Expand performing, visual, and cultural arts and make them more affordable;
  - Increase marketing of programs;
  - Offer more opportunities for drop-in recreational activities;
  - Provide a stable source of funding for parks, recreation and cultural services; and
  - Develop and improve partnerships with the community.



- Staff identified the following improvements as **top priority issues**:
  - Develop and construct a system of neighborhood-based community centers;
  - Update existing parks and recreation facilities;
  - Acquire and develop open space and parks community-wide;
  - Offer programs for all ages and abilities; and
  - Stabilize funding.
- Parks, recreation and cultural services, and open spaces offer the following **benefits**:
  - Personal benefits, including youth development, health and wellness, opportunities to enjoy nature, and improved quality of life;
  - Community benefits, such as a developed sense of community and opportunities for family recreation and social interaction; and
  - Economic benefits, such as attracting business and improving the value of housing.
- Staff identified the following as **core values** that guide service decisions and staff actions:
  - Professionalism and customer service;
  - Affordable, accessible, diverse programs;
  - Quality, innovative parks and facilities;
  - Environmental sensitivity;
  - Efficient and effective use of funding;
  - Leisure opportunities that contribute to a better quality of life; and
  - Excellent staff who make a difference in the lives of community members!
- The following improvements would make parks, programs, and facilities more **accessible to people with disabilities**:
  - Providing more information about program, park and facility accessibility;
  - Providing free tickets to Hult Center events for low income people who are experiencing disability;
  - Working with other agencies and individuals with disabilities to identify other program improvements;
  - Adding more accessible restrooms;
  - Improving accessibility at pools;
  - Renovating existing facilities with accessibility in mind;
  - Involving individuals with disabilities in project development; and
  - Improving accessible parking.
- Staff felt that the following **partnerships** would be important to LRCS:
  - Shared facilities and programs with schools (school districts);
  - Coordination between LRCS and Parks and Recreation for planning; and
  - Improved partnerships with media, private businesses, and community organizations.
- **Communication** with City residents could be improved through the following:
  - Using marketing to increase awareness of existing services and benefits;
  - Improving relationships with all media venues; and
  - Investigating other types of public information (website, newsletters, notices).



## I. Maintenance Staff Focus Group

### *Overview*

The public employees who perform maintenance on the City's parks and open space have a deep understanding of the challenges facing parks and natural areas in Eugene. In an effort to gather their input, a POS maintenance staff focus group workshop was held on January 22, 2003. Topics for discussion included the employees' vision of Eugene's parks and natural areas, an evaluation of service strengths, and suggested improvements to park maintenance and the park and open space system. Participants also received questionnaires to complete. Twenty-eight staff attended the workshop and 16 submitted written comments.

### *Key Findings*

The following key findings emerged from the workshop and written comments:

- The maintenance staff **vision for the future** of parks, recreation and open space includes:
  - Diverse, accessible park and recreation opportunities;
  - Clean, safe and well-maintained parks and facilities;
  - Efficient, professional staff;
  - Community ownership and participation in our parks and open spaces; and
  - Knowledge that the City planned effectively to meet future needs.
- **Core values** of park maintenance staff which will help achieve this vision include:
  - Pride, responsibility and ownership in the job;
  - Maintaining the City's investment in existing parks and facilities;
  - Environmental stewardship;
  - Innovative and knowledgeable staff; and
  - Positive teamwork among staff and between planning, design, maintenance and programming.
- Maintenance staff recognized the following as some of the **most important benefits** of parks, recreation services and open space:
  - Provide opportunities to enjoy nature/outdoors;
  - Connect people together, building stronger families and neighborhoods; and
  - Improve health and wellness.
- Staff recognized the following as **service strengths**:
  - Employee strengths, such as commitment, teamwork, innovation and quality work;
  - Maintaining a safe, clean environment for all to enjoy;
  - Quality sports fields; and
  - Diverse types of parks, including wetlands and natural areas.
- Maintenance staff noted the need for the following **improvements**:
  - Upgrade existing older parks and facilities to reduce maintenance costs;
  - Stabilize funding and provide adequate staffing in all maintenance areas;
  - Provide new facility types to increase community use, such as community centers, a regional play area, sports complex, dog parks, etc.;
  - Improve park safety, such as by providing rangers or a maintenance swing-shift to improve park supervision;
  - Improve staff wages and provide a variety of responsibilities (cross-train staff);
  - Decrease "unnecessary" lawn areas;
  - Replace outdated irrigation systems and reduce irrigation of areas where it is not needed, such as native plant areas;
  - Increase public awareness of wetlands and natural areas, and continue invasive species removal;





- Improve trails, provide adequate trail drainage and provide public education and information, such as improved trailhead signage;
  - Continue upgrading play areas;
  - Improve trash pick-up and removal;
  - Keep staff safety in mind when designing medians and use low maintenance plantings; and
  - Provide more fun water complexes and improve maintenance.
- The majority of staff agreed that they are provided with the necessary **tools and equipment** to efficiently maintain park, open space and recreation facilities; more specialty tools and replacement of aging fleet vehicles were among suggested improvements.
  - Improving communication at all levels was mentioned as the best way to **enhance partnerships**.
  - **Community volunteers** could best assist with maintenance by creating a presence in the parks and assisting with clean-up, invasive species removal, and enforcement of park rules (such as ticketing those who don't clean up after dogs).
  - When asked to identify the **highest priority** park, recreation and open space improvements, most staff thought that **stable funding** and **renovating existing parks** to rebuild Eugene's park infrastructure were the most needed improvements.

## J. Recreation and Social Service Providers

### *Overview*

In addition to programs offered by the City of Eugene, there are numerous private and non-profit organizations that provide recreation and social services to City residents. In an effort to gather their input for Eugene's PROS Comprehensive Plan Update, a provider focus group workshop was held on February 20, 2003. Meeting topics included population needs, service gaps, community trends, partnership opportunities, and priority improvements. Participants also received questionnaires to complete. Twenty-one people attended the workshop, and 17 submitted written comments. Over half of the providers served elementary, middle school, and high-school youths, while providers for adults, seniors, cultural groups, and people with disabilities were also present.

### *Key Findings*

The following key findings emerged from the workshop and written comments:

- Providers identified the following as some of the **primary needs** of the populations they serve:
  - Youth programs;
  - Community centers;
  - Additional sports fields;
  - A multi-use sports complex;
  - Bilingual (Spanish) staff and materials;
  - Life-skills development and educational support;
  - Basic services, such as food, clothing, housing and medical care; and
  - A better coordinated effort among all providers to meet needs.
- Service providers discussed a number of **trends** that are apparent in the City today:
  - Increased fees resulting from budget cuts may be prohibitive for some residents;
  - Great need for youth services and after-school activities;
  - More difficult for low income individuals and families; and
  - Increased challenges in providing adequate services and staffing.





- Providers identified the following **gaps in services**:
  - Meaningful programs and services for teens, like community service opportunities and technology-based learning;
  - Continued collaboration to provide services;
  - Neighborhood-based community centers;
  - Team sports and club sports;
  - Recreation for people with disabilities;
  - Drop-in programs;
  - Information in Spanish and help with immigration issues;
  - Program accessibility for non-mainstream youth and families;
  - Transportation and/or facilities and services within walking distance;
  - A central clearinghouse for program information; and
  - Adequate funding.
- Participants thought that **promoting youth development** was the **most important benefit** of parks, recreation services, and open space. Other important benefits include:
  - Connecting people together, building stronger families and neighborhoods;
  - Providing opportunities for lifelong learning;
  - Improving health and wellness; and
  - Enhancing community image and fostering a sense of place.
- Providers discussed the ways in which they each could **partner with the City** to enhance services. Key ideas include:
  - Develop an on-going forum with partner agencies;
  - Develop a coordinated clearinghouse for information about recreation resources; and
  - Continue collaborative programs with partner agencies.
- Providers hoped **the City could contribute resources** to a partnership as well:
  - Funding and financial support;
  - Access to facilities, especially at no or low cost;
  - Assistance with marketing and registration; and
  - Develop facilities that can be used by community organizations.
- Providers felt that the following priority **improvements to the parks, recreation and open space system** are most needed in Eugene today:
  - Develop neighborhood-based community centers;
  - Develop a sports complex;
  - Continued improvements in neighborhood parks;
  - Provide parks and recreation facilities in underserved areas;
  - Expand volunteerism;
  - Expand programs for children and youth;
  - Continue and expand collaborations with other providers; and
  - Improve access to parks, programs and services and facilities for non-mainstream populations.

## K. Natural Resource and Open Space Focus Group

### *Overview*

The current parks and open space system in Eugene includes a number of different habitat types and natural open space areas, along with a wealth of natural resources. One of the goals of the PROS Comprehensive Plan is to ensure these resources are well protected and managed into the future. As part of this effort, representatives from Eugene natural resource organizations and agencies met as a focus group on January 29, 2003. Participants offered their suggestions on a wide range of topics, including accessibility, preservation, volunteerism and education. They also were asked to complete a questionnaire. Thirty-eight people attended the workshop, and 28 submitted written comments.



### *Key Findings*

The following key findings emerged from the workshop and written comments:

- Protecting Eugene’s natural resources and preserving natural open space **contribute significant benefits to residents, to the community, and to our environment**. The values of natural open space include improved mental and physical health, habitat protection, community identity, education and recreation, and protection of natural and cultural history.
- Protection of natural resource values requires a strong **open space acquisition program**. Acquisition priorities in Eugene should include Ridgeline sites, farmland, Metro NRS sites, the confluence of the Willamette and McKenzie Rivers, and rare and endangered habitat types.
- Eugene’s **natural open space program could be improved** by providing additional public information, revising planning and design policies to emphasize natural resource values, and utilizing appropriate parks and open space maintenance practices aimed at enhancing habitat, improving water quality, and minimizing impacts.
- Increasing community involvement in natural resource protection will allow the City to accomplish more with limited resources. Strategies to improve **community involvement in stewardship programs** included increasing volunteer coordination, developing partnerships with area natural resource organizations and schools, and developing an environmental education center.
- Participants expressed a general level of **dissatisfaction with the current parks and open space system** as it relates to natural resource values. To address this, the PROS Comprehensive Plan should increase the amount of protected open space, improve the geographic distribution of natural open space to provide equity throughout the community, and provide strategies to improve the natural resource values of both developed and natural public open space in Eugene.
- The PROS Comprehensive Plan should address the **following priorities for meeting natural resource objectives** in the parks and open space system:
  - Identify and acquire ecologically significant sites;
  - Foster stewardship through improved public information and education, including better signage, park maps, and an environmental education center;
  - Improve existing natural resource areas by providing needed resources to improve habitat and eliminate invasive species;
  - Develop strong management plans to identify natural resource priorities, such as oak habitat, riparian areas, and remnant native prairies;
  - Pursue adequate funding to accomplish natural resource priorities; and
  - Implement a regional scale trails and open space program, i.e., the Coast to Cascade Trail.

### **L. Multi-Cultural Focus Group**

#### *Overview*

In an effort to gather input from individuals from Eugene’s diverse cultural groups, a Multi-cultural Focus Group was held on February 12, 2003. Participants offered their input on a variety of topics, including improving existing parks, recreation and open space opportunities for individuals from diverse cultures; the desired mix of natural area parks vs. active parks for Eugene; a vision for a community center targeted toward people from diverse cultures; and how to encourage people from diverse cultures to increase their participation in parks and recreation opportunities in the City. Three participants attended, and 3 additional individuals later submitted written comments.



Additional outreach efforts were conducted to expand on the findings of this report, including a Communities of Color Workshop and Speakers Bureau presentations to groups representing Eugene's diverse community.

### *Key Findings*

The following key findings emerged from the workshop:

- **Recreation programs** could be more attractive to Eugene's diverse community if:
  - Programs were more economically accessible;
  - Diversity was highlighted in the Program Guide; and
  - Culturally appropriate instructors were hired for classes addressing cultural traditions, e.g., a class in Native American arts should be taught by a Native American.
- **Parks, natural areas and recreation facilities** could better meet the needs of Eugene's diverse population by:
  - Interpreting diverse cultures in parks, natural areas and facilities;
  - Developing a community center targeted toward people of diverse cultures;
  - Providing appropriate spaces for large group picnics and events;
  - Incorporating natural areas into active parks and neighborhoods; and
  - Working to reduce racism and increase acceptance in our community.
- Participants suggested that the City increase **participation by people from diverse cultures** in parks, open space and recreation services by providing more relevant recreation opportunities and creating a more welcoming atmosphere:
  - Increase collaboration with people from diverse cultures in planning, designing and implementing recreation opportunities;
  - Increase outreach as well as cultural relevance of public information; and
  - Hire diverse staff.

The following is a summary of additional written comments:

- The **primary needs** of the cultural groups represented include human rights, education, employment opportunities, and health care.
- The **primary needs of the youth** from the groups represented include a sense of belonging, education, and religious and cultural identity.
- The City could provide the following types of **parks, recreation and open space elements or programs** to meet the needs of the diverse groups:
  - Cultural events;
  - Anti-racism education; and
  - Social and professional skill building for youth.
- The following **benefits** of parks, recreation and open space service are most important:
  - Celebrate and raise awareness of diverse cultural traditions;
  - Enhance community image and sense of place;
  - Connect people together, building stronger families and neighborhoods; and
  - Improve health and wellness.
- When asked to identify the **highest priority improvements** in parks, recreation and open space improvements, participants mentioned **training in understanding racism** and **hiring more people of color**.



## M. Communities of Color

### *Overview*

In an effort to expand on the findings of the multi-cultural focus group, LRCS hosted Community Connections: A Focus Group with Leaders of Communities of Color on April 11, 2003, at the Hilyard Community Center. Forty-three people participated in the meeting. Small groups were asked to list the following: LRCS services that are working for them, challenges and barriers for people trying to access LRCS services, and new services that could be offered to better serve the community. Afterward, the lists were posted on a wall. Participants were asked to rate the urgency of each item and their willingness to help by placing colored dots on each item on the list. Red dots indicated most urgent items, green dots indicated next highest priorities, and yellow indicated other important items. Participants were not limited in the number of dots they could use. All together, participants used 403 red dots, 98 green dots, and 76 yellow dots to indicate which items were most significant to them.

### *Key Findings*

The following items were rated as most urgent, with 5 or more red dots:

- **Partnerships at special events** with community organizations are working well (Asian Celebration, MLK, NAACP fund, Kalapuya) (5 red dots).
- Participants noted a number of concerns regarding the **hiring, make-up, and cultural competence of staff**, such as the following:
  - Hiring multi-lingual, minority staff in temporary but not permanent positions (8 red dots).
  - Staff does not reflect inclusive community (5 red dots).
  - The City needs to employ more bilingual/bicultural staff (13 red dots).
  - Summer hiring should target youth of color (6 red dots).
  - Create a minority internship program (16 red dots).
  - Hiring rather than relying on volunteer people of color (9 red dots).
  - Create a staff coordinator for minority programs (16 red dots).
  - Staff needs "understanding racism" training (31 red dots).
- LRCS should reflect **histories, needs, and experience of all communities**:
  - Historical programs need to reflect dishonorable past and not just the good stuff (5 red dots).
  - Library could be a repository for local history of communities of color (10 red dots).
  - Different communities need different types of outreach (7 red dots).
  - The City should define outreach efforts, results, and outcomes (12 red dots).
  - Create a multi-cultural focus at specific community centers (6 red dots).
- LRCS should address **geographic, racial, ethnic, and class discrimination** in locating facilities:
  - A community center is needed in the inner city/Whitaker area (12 red dots).
  - Explore funding/grants to improve Whitaker facilities (8 red dots )
- Opportunities for **marketing, partnerships, and collaborations** can be explored:
  - Explore partnerships to bridge multi-cultural communities (12 red dots).
  - The lack of contacts between groups causes barriers to communication (6 red dots).
  - LRCS can help facilitate opportunities for dialogue between and among communities (6 red dots).
- Participants suggested ways for LRCS to become more **welcoming, accessible, and inclusive**:
  - Create a cultural center to facilitate outreach of services (5 red dots).
  - Expand translation services at the Library to include more languages (5 red dots).
  - Increase corporate involvement (5 red dots).



- Provide weekend/evening activities for children and youth (20 red dots).
- Get the business community more involved (5 red dots).
- Expand partnerships with Rites of Passage (6 red dots).
- Participants noted a demand for **lower cost athletics for youth** (10 red dots).
- **Transportation** to and from programs can be a barrier for youth, seniors, and all (5 red dots).

## N. Business Community Focus Group

### *Overview*

The City of Eugene hosted a two-hour forum with local employers and representatives of business, tourism, and economic interests at the Eugene Library on April 21, 2003. The purpose of the forum was to discuss the role that parks, recreation and open space has in the region's economy and to build a strong and positive relationship between these critical community interests. Focus group participants discussed a variety of issues, including identifying local examples of parks, recreation, and open space that contribute to the economic health of the Eugene community, suggesting new ideas and directions, partnership models, and future priorities. Thirteen business leaders attended the workshop and submitted written comments.

### *Key Findings*

Key findings from the discussion and comment sheet responses included:

- Participants agreed that parks, recreation, and open space **are great community assets** that provide economic benefit to Eugene's residents, employers, and business owners.
- Significant **local examples** exist, including the area's excellent botanical gardens, the extensive bike system and riverfront bike paths, the Ridgeline Trail, outstanding cultural facilities such as Hult and Cuthbert, and the Park Blocks that provide a setting for Saturday Market, Lane County Farmer's Market, and the Eugene Celebration.
- A recreational **niche market** for Eugene should be sought, which may include building a destination sports facility, such as a multi-sports complex and tournament locations to draw a regional or national audience.
- Local recreational and cultural **passions**, such as gymnastics, skateboarding, track and field, football, basketball, and baseball, should form the foundation of new ideas.
- Eugene already has a reputation as a healthy, active lifestyle community and opportunities exist to "**brand**" it, working with the business community.
- The business/recreation connection is a strong one that should be fostered by creating an **ongoing dialogue** with the business community to support parks and recreation.
- Eugene has a good track record with **partnerships**, and more can be developed by including Eugene In Common, other City departments, bicycle manufacturers and retailers, service clubs, area resorts, school districts, Kidsports, and other regional public partners.
- Business community leaders should be encouraged to **champion** the parks and recreation cause and serve as catalysts for further partnership efforts.
- The overall city-wide approach to business should prioritize **superior customer service**, and promote a positive recreation-based approach to City and community leadership.



## O. Stakeholder Interviews

### *Overview*

Between January 30 and February 21, 2003, MIG, Inc. conducted telephone interviews with 12 community leaders identified by the City. The purpose of these interviews was to obtain community input on perceptions about park, recreation, and open space in the City of Eugene and about the issues and challenges facing the community. Interviewees were asked a series of questions, and interviews were typically about 30 minutes in length.

### *Key Findings*

Overall, most interviewees felt that the City generally had a good park, recreation and open space system. A common theme among the responses was that a valued benefit of parks, open spaces and recreation facilities is to provide opportunities for the community to gather and opportunities to enjoy nature and get away from the urban environment. Several commented positively on the City's accomplishments with the past bond measure and serial levy, and noted their approval of the expanded use of partnerships to leverage many of these projects.

Many noted it will become more difficult to acquire land for parks or natural areas as the City grows. Most interviewees recognized the need to expand parks and natural areas to keep up with population growth and to ensure that all residents have adequate access. A variety of recreation facility needs were mentioned, including neighborhood-based community centers and sports facilities. Many identified youth as the population with the greatest recreation need. Almost all interviewees mentioned funding or the economy as a key issue or challenge in Eugene.

Many of the interviewees expressed concern about reaching the broader community and ensuring that the Comprehensive Plan reflects the needs of the entire community. The majority of the interviewees recommended reaching the public by going to places where people already gather or to groups where they already meet.

Strengths and weaknesses of the City's current park, recreation and open space system, opportunities for the future, and possible threats to success as identified in the stakeholder interviews are summarized below:

### Strengths

- People **value Eugene parks and natural areas**.
- Parks and natural areas provide the following **benefits** to Eugene residents:
  - Places for community gathering and opportunities for recreation.
  - Relief from the urban environment and an opportunity to experience nature and the outdoors.
  - Recreation opportunities for children, youth and families.
  - Opportunities for health and wellness through participation in physical activities, such as sports, aquatics and outdoor recreation.
- Eugene's **natural areas provide significant habitat**. Some people value these areas beyond the benefit of recreational use.
- Eugene's **recreation resources** are appreciated by the community. Some of these include City trails, the Willamette River and the Hult Center.
- Despite budget constraints, City recreation and cultural services are viewed positively for efforts to provide services through a combination of City **programs partnerships** with other agencies.
- Eugene has done well at **protecting natural resources and open space**, even though more efforts may be needed.





- Interviewees were generally **satisfied with park maintenance**.
- Interviewees viewed the City's performance with the past **serial levies and bond issues** as generally positive.
- People in Eugene are **active, well informed, and they care** about the City.

#### Weaknesses

- Sustaining recreation programs and services while the City **budget diminishes** is a challenge.
- There is a need for **additional recreation programs**, such as adult programs, youth programs and activities focusing on diverse cultures, as well as programs that could bridge gaps created by other budget reductions.
- The **cost of programs** makes them unaffordable to some.
- **Places for youth** to gather and recreate is one of the City's greatest needs.
- A variety of **services are needed by youth**, including the arts, sports and fitness, and services for youth at risk.
- Residents differ in their opinions of the relative importance of **active recreation** and opportunities to experience the **natural environment** in the City of Eugene.
- Some areas do not have **equal access** to parks, natural areas, community centers or aquatic facilities. North Eugene, West Eugene, Bethel, Churchill, Fairgrounds, Santa Clara, and Trainsong were all mentioned as being underserved for certain recreation opportunities.
- There is a **shortage of sports fields**.
- Some **natural areas may be "over-used"** or impacted by humans and animals.
- The City's efforts to **protect natural areas**, including riparian areas and prairie areas, should be expanded.
- **Maintenance and improvements** to existing parks, natural areas and recreation facilities are needed.
- There are a lot of meetings Citywide, and some feel decisions tend to be based on the **vocal minority, rather than the overall community**.

#### Opportunities

- Continue to address quality of life in Eugene by ensuring that all residents have **equitable access** to parks, open space and recreation opportunities.
- **Improve** existing parks and natural areas.
- Provide **neighborhood-based community centers**.
- Ensure that **adequate sports facilities** exist throughout the community to meet community needs.
- Continue to **expand youth development opportunities**, especially opportunities lost due to cuts in education, non-school programs and teen programs.
- Respond to **the needs of Eugene's diverse population**, such as people with disabilities, youth, individuals from diverse cultures, seniors, low-income individuals and other populations with special needs.
- Provide opportunities for residents to appreciate Eugene's **cultural and historic heritage, natural resources, and the arts**.



- Consider how parks, recreation and open space can contribute to the **economic development** of the community.
- Improve existing **partnerships** and build new ones, including the business community and the schools.
- Expand existing **volunteer opportunities** to involve a broad range of residents in planning, implementing and maintaining parks and recreation resources and services.
- Improve **public information** about all parks, natural areas, recreation, and cultural services in City (both public and private), including environmental education.

#### Threats

- **Financial resources** are becoming more limited, and citizens are not confident about the future outlook.
- **Development may limit available land** for future parks and natural areas.
- **Major cutbacks** in social services and education have occurred that create increased need for parks and recreation services.

## VIII. PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ANALYSIS

This section contains an overview of the Parks and Open Space Analysis completed as part of the PROS Plan Community Needs Assessment in December 2004. It presents key findings relating to the assessment of need for parks, natural areas, recreation amenities and facilities. Additional information to support the analysis is provided in the following appendixes to the Community Needs Assessment:

- Appendix A contains the classifications and definitions of parks and open spaces;
- Appendix B contains an inventory of facilities listed by park classification;
- Appendix C is an inventory of facilities by planning sub-area; and
- Appendix D includes an evaluation of the City-owned natural areas' conditions.

The Parks and Open Space Analysis is available in its entirety from the Parks and Open Space Division.

### A. Purpose

The purpose of the Parks and Open Space Analysis is:

- To assess community need and preferences for parks, open space, and recreation amenities and facilities, along with trends affecting facility use;
- To document the type, number, and condition of parks and recreation amenities and facilities available to City residents today;
- To analyze the ratio of parks and facilities to population (current level of service) and assess current and future needs; and
- To provide a basis for the development of strategies and actions for the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Comprehensive Plan.





## B. Standards vs. Needs Assessment

The Parks and Open Space Analysis proposes minimum parkland standards that could be adopted to serve as a guide for the development of a future park system. These standards are expressed in terms of acres per 1,000 population. A goal of these standards is to provide for both active recreation use and natural area parks in accordance with community values. The report also assesses the need for individual recreation amenities and facilities within parks. This need is discussed in terms of proposed minimum level of service, expressed in terms of one facility per number of people, and net numbers of facilities needed. Adopting formal standards for these facilities is not proposed.

Both parkland standards and recreation amenity and facility needs identified in the Park and Open Space Analysis will be used to develop strategies and actions for enhancing Eugene's parks, open space, and recreation facilities. The strategies and actions will be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan to describe the specifics of how the City will achieve its vision.

## C. Methodology

A variety of methods were used to assess current and future need for parks, natural areas, recreation amenities, and facilities:

- **Public Involvement:** All results of the PROS Comprehensive Plan community involvement efforts were used in the analysis.
- **Review of Trends:** The following sources were consulted to identify local, state, and national trends in sports and recreation:
  - **Eugene Population, Demographic and Economic Trends (LCOG, 2003):** This population trend analysis was prepared as part of the PROS Comprehensive Plan update. Data used is for the Urban Growth Boundary rather than the PROS planning area due to data availability. The current population is 160,469 and the projected 2025 population is 210,900. Planning area build-out may differ from this projection since the planning area extends beyond the UGB. Subsequent updates to the PROS plan should include updated population forecasts to confirm or update this data.
  - **Oregon Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2003-2007 (SCORP):** The SCORP is a 5-year statewide plan for recreation that enables the state to maintain eligibility for federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) monies. Oregon's SCORP includes valuable information about recreation trends and participation in Oregon, and it provides detail about different geographic regions of the state.
  - **National Sporting Goods Association (NSGA):** NSGA is the national association for sporting goods retailers. NSGA conducts an annual nationwide study about recreation participation. Current and historical participation information is available on NSGA's website and as printed publications.
  - **MIG Average:** MIG maintains a database on current recreation participation. The MIG Average is continually updated and reflects the average recreation participation in the past 15 communities surveyed by MIG.
- **Parks and Open Space Classifications and Definitions:** Based on the City's current inventory of parks and open space and commonly used classification systems, new classifications have been proposed. Definitions for each park class are provided in Appendix A.



- **Parks and Open Space Inventory:** City staff conducted a complete inventory of parks, open space, amenities and facilities owned by the City of Eugene. The results are displayed in Appendix B by park classification and in Appendix C by planning sub-areas.
- **Park Amenity Evaluation:** As part of the PROS Comprehensive Plan development, Parks and Open Space staff evaluated the condition of park amenities, excluding buildings, in all City-owned parks and open space areas in the winter of 2003. Evaluations of recreation buildings are included in the Facility Condition Report Summary, described below. MIG worked with City staff to develop the 3-point rating scale used in the park amenity evaluation. The results of the evaluation are summarized in the Parks and Open Space Analysis by individual site and by park type.
- **Natural Area Evaluation:** As part of the PROS Comprehensive Plan development, Parks and Open Space staff developed a rating system and evaluated the condition of significant natural resources in City-owned parks in Winter 2003. Appendix D summarizes the results of the evaluation of each site by park type and resource value.
- **Facility Condition Report Summary:** Parks and recreation buildings, such as community centers, pools, and park restrooms, are managed by the Facilities Division of the Central Services Department. For the 2001 *Facility Condition Report (FCR)*, the Facility Management Division assessed the condition of Eugene's General Fund building inventory. Each facility's state of deterioration, current replacement value, and emerging deficiencies were noted. A summary of this data is presented in the Parks and Open Space Analysis.
- **Standards Analysis:** The current and future need for parks and recreation amenities and facilities are generally expressed as a ratio of the number of facilities provided per 1,000 people. This ratio describes the level of service provided to the community. To establish minimum standards for Eugene's parks and natural areas and to identify needs for recreation amenities and facilities, the current level of service provided was compared to that of other Oregon agencies, comparable communities in other regions, and historic NRPA standards. Community demand was the primary consideration. In some cases, a formula was used to assess need. The standards for parks and natural areas, along with the need for recreation amenities and facilities, are described in detail in the Parks and Open Space Analysis report.

#### D. Key Findings

Key findings from the Parks and Open Space Analysis include the following:

- The City of Eugene currently maintains about 2,900 acres of parkland at 130 sites, providing a level of service of about 18 acres per 1,000 residents.
- To meet the needs of residents in 2025 (population 210,900), about 1,300 additional parkland acres will be needed. The parkland standards proposed in the Park and Open Space Analysis will help the City create a park system that provides for both active recreation and the preservation of natural areas. A standard of 20.0 acres per 1000 residents for total parkland is proposed to provide adequate park, recreation, and open space resources for the future. Connectivity between parks and natural areas should be emphasized.
- Areas that do not have any access to any park type within a half-mile service area should be a high priority for future park acquisition.
- Parks and natural areas are not equitably distributed throughout the City. Each of the planning areas has assets and deficiencies that will need to be addressed in the PROS plan.



- In addition to opportunities provided by the City of Eugene, residents have access to recreation facilities owned, managed or maintained by others, including local, state and federal agencies, and schools. In addition, non-profit organizations and the private sector provide other recreation opportunities. Eugene School District 4J and Bethel School District 52 are important providers of active recreation opportunities. The extent to which the City can work with these agencies to coordinate acquisition, development, use, and maintenance of these facilities will be an important component of Comprehensive Plan recommendations.
- New outdoor recreation amenities, natural area amenities, and recreation facilities are needed, and more will be needed to meet community needs in 2025. Outdoor basketball courts, children's play areas, soccer fields, softball/baseball fields, and pedestrian and multiuse trails are needed. In addition, more gymnasiums, swimming pools and community centers will be needed.
- Overall, improving existing parks was the number one top priority of all parks, recreation, and open space improvements needed in Eugene today, according to the community survey. The Park Amenity Evaluation, Natural Area Evaluation, and the Facility Condition Report provide information about specific renovation improvements needed.
- The proposed level of service for amenities and facilities presented in this report are intended to serve as a guide to assess current and future needs. They are not intended to be adopted as a formal standard.

#### **E. Assessment of Need for Parks and Open Space**

The City of Eugene owns and manages the following types of parks and natural areas:

- Neighborhood parks
- Community parks
- Natural area parks
- Urban plazas
- Metropolitan parks
- Linear parks/greenways
- Special use facilities

Map 2 illustrates Eugene parks according to the seven park classifications. It includes a few parks and open space sites located within the study area that are not owned, nor managed by the City of Eugene. For example, Emerald Park, which is located within the River Road/Santa Clara planning sub-area, is owned and managed by the River Road Parks District. Some natural areas, such the Willow Creek Natural Area, are owned and managed by The Nature Conservancy. For definitions of each park type in the classification system, see Appendix A. A complete inventory of the City's parks and open space system by park type is included in Appendix B.

Proposed standards and anticipated need for parks and natural areas in Eugene are summarized in Table 6. As a guideline to establish new standards for Eugene, the current level of service is compared to standards of other cities, Oregon average standards, the 1989 Plan, and historic NRPA standards. Community demand for each of the various park and open space types is considered in developing the new standards, which are expressed in acres per 1000 people. A standards analysis is provided for each of the seven park types.



### **Neighborhood Parks**

Neighborhood parks are small parks located within biking and walking distance of users. They provide access to basic recreation opportunities for nearby residents, enhance neighborhood identity, and preserve neighborhood open space.

Map 3 shows the service areas of parks and school playgrounds that meet neighborhood need. Service area for purposes of this map is based on the current planning target of providing a park or school playground within a half-mile safe walking distance. Major streets with higher volume or higher speed traffic are considered barriers to a safe walk for purposes of this analysis. This map also displays residential areas that are not within a safe walking distance of a park or a school playground. Residential areas are those areas designated in the Eugene/Springfield Metropolitan Plan as high, medium, or low density residential. Some residential areas had been provided service by schools and no longer are because the schools are or will be closed. These areas are also shown on the map.

The City of Eugene provides 50 neighborhood parks, ranging from 0.37 to 20.0 acres in size. Examples of neighborhood parks include Irwin, Charnel Mulligan, Bramblewood, Laurel Hill, Oakmont, and Skyview. Neighborhood parks account for 208.63 total acres. Several neighborhood park amenities are in poor to fair shape. According to the park amenity evaluation, sports fields, planting/shrubs, signage, and lighting were rated in less than fair condition (<2 in the evaluation). Although off-street parking is not typically provided in neighborhood parks, existing parking lots were also in poor condition.

Twenty-two (22) neighborhood parks in Eugene contain significant natural areas, ranging in size from 0.1 to 18.0 acres (Appendix D). Approximately 35% of neighborhood park acreage is managed for natural resource values. Their resource values range widely (from 4 to 20). Some of the sites with a greater resource value contain open waterways or wetlands. On average, neighborhood parks have a resource value of 8.8. This score is the lowest of all of the park classifications. Significant issues affecting the resource value of neighborhood parks include the small size of these areas and lack of continuity with the other natural areas.

The Willakenzie planning sub-area has the highest number of unserved areas at eleven. The City Center planning area has the fewest number with one area. Several neighborhood park sites in the River Road/Santa Clara sub-area have been acquired but are not yet developed.

### **Public Involvement Findings/Trends**

- Neighborhood parks are the most highly used recreation facilities for youth and the general population. According to the Community Survey, respondents averaged 6.74 visits per capita annually. In the Youth Questionnaire, respondents averaged 6.03 visits annually.
- According to the Community Survey, youths aged 10 to 14 and adults aged 35-44 were most likely of all age groups to frequent neighborhood parks.
- Neighborhood parks *provide opportunities to enjoy nature/outdoors and connect people together, building stronger families and neighborhoods*. These are two of the top three benefits of parks, recreation, and open space, according to respondents from the Community Survey, the Eugene Celebration, and the Speakers Bureau.
- Creating more neighborhood parks is a priority park improvement, according to more than 20% of the respondents from the Community Survey, Eugene Celebration, and Speakers Bureau.

*Develop additional smaller, close-to-home neighborhood parks* ranked second for park improvements in the Community Survey, Eugene Celebration Report, and the Youth Questionnaire. It was the number one choice for respondents aged 10 to 14 and 35 to 44, according to the Community Survey.



Insert Map 2 - **FRONT**



Insert Map 2 - **BACK**



Insert **Table 6**



Insert Table 6: back





Insert Map 3 - **FRONT**



Insert Map 3 - **BACK**



- Overall, *improve existing parks* was the number one top priority of all parks, recreation, and open space improvements most needed in Eugene today, according to the Community Survey.
- The Recreation and Social Service Provider Focus Group also identified *improving neighborhood parks* as a priority in Eugene.
- Nearly one-third of respondents in the Youth Questionnaire indicated they would be most comfortable attending recreation activities at school. School properties frequently serve as neighborhood parks.
- The age groups most likely to use school facilities for recreation are youths aged 10-14, youths aged 15-17, and adults aged 35-44.

#### *Potential Partners*

Property and facilities managed by Eugene School District 4J and Bethel School District 52 are distributed in neighborhoods throughout the City. These facilities are available for use on a limited basis and often function as focal points for neighborhood recreation. Recent school district moves to consolidate schools and dispose of surplus property indicate a strong need to coordinate the long range planning of parks and recreation facilities with schools.

#### *Standards Analysis*

The City currently provides 1.30 acres of neighborhood parks per 1,000 population (Table 6). Based on the service area map (Map 3), there are between 60 and 70 separate residential areas not within a half-mile safe walking distance of a playground. Some of these, however, represent small geographic areas and do not warrant the development of a neighborhood park facility. It is estimated that roughly 37 additional neighborhood parks are needed to serve the residential areas within the Urban Growth Boundary.

At an average size of 4 acres each, this would mean an additional 148 acres of land would be needed. If this number is added to the existing inventory (208.63 acres) and divided by the projected 2025 population (per 1,000 people), a proposed standard of 1.7 acres per 1,000 people can be derived.

Comparable standards for neighborhood parks range from 1.13 to 2.0 acres per 1,000 people (Table 6). Based on the proposed standard, 150 acres of additional land will be needed by the year 2025.

#### **Community Parks**

Community parks are larger parks that provide active and passive recreational opportunities for all City residents. Community parks can accommodate large group activities and typically have internal parking areas and sport fields. Community parks have a service area radius of 2 miles. Map 4 illustrates the distribution of community parks in Eugene, along with their service areas. Metropolitan parks are included on the map, since these park types provide opportunities similar to community parks.

The City provides 10 community parks, ranging from 8.36 to 90.0 acres in size. Examples of community parks include Amazon, Westmoreland, and Bethel Community Park. Three parks serving community park needs are located on School District property. These include Sheldon, Churchill, and Cal Young Sports Parks. Community Parks contribute 219.17 total acres of parks in Eugene. In general, community park amenities are in fair to good condition. According to the park amenity evaluation, only park signage rated in fair condition. Other park amenities rated from fair to good.



Six community parks contain significant natural areas, ranging from 0.4 to 35.0 acres in size (Appendix D). The average resource value for community parks is 9.2, with scores for individual sites ranging from 5 to 18 (overall range is from low of 4 to high of 22). Community parks have the second lowest average score for all park types. Park size and continuity are factors that affect the resource value of community parks.

In reviewing the analysis, it is evident that Eugene has tended to minimize the development of active recreation facilities, such as basketball and athletic fields, within neighborhood or metropolitan parks. These park types are identified as having between 35% and 67% of their areas managed for natural resource values. This has resulted in community parks providing a majority of the active recreation space in Eugene.

#### *Public Involvement Findings/Trends*

- Community parks are the third most highly-used recreation facilities in Eugene, for youths and the general population. According to the Community Survey, respondents averaged 5.52 per capita visits annually. Youth averaged of 4.47 visits annually, according to the Youth Questionnaire.
- The age groups most likely to use community parks frequently are adults aged 25-34, adults aged 35-44, and seniors (65+).
- Nearly one-third of respondents in the Youth Questionnaire indicated they would be most comfortable attending recreation activities at school. School district properties frequently border community parks.
- Overall, developing new community parks ranked as a low- to medium-priority project for the City of Eugene. More than 13.9% of respondents in the Community Survey, Speakers Bureau, and Youth Questionnaire chose *develop more large, multi-use community parks like Amazon Park* as a priority in park improvements. However, only 5.6% from the Eugene Celebration indicated that choice.
- Renovating existing parks is a high priority for parks in Eugene. *Upgrade/Complete existing parks* ranked number one in desired park improvements, according to the Community Survey (30.5%), the Speakers Bureau (28.3%), and the Youth Questionnaire (23.2%). In the Eugene Celebration Report, upgrading parks ranked third, with 19.2% choosing it as a priority.
- Overall, *improve existing parks* was the number one top priority of all parks, recreation, and open space improvements most needed in Eugene today.

#### *Potential Partners*

Property and facilities managed by Eugene School District 4J and Bethel School District 52 are distributed throughout the City. In some cases, school properties adjoin community parks, such as the Sheldon Sports Park, Bethel Community Park, and Ascot Park. School facilities are available for use on a limited basis and often function as focal points for recreation.

Partnerships could be created with the River Road Park and Recreation District, who maintains Emerald Park as a valuable site for community recreation.



Insert Map 4 - **FRONT**



Insert Map 4 - **BACK**



### *Standards Analysis*

Currently, the City provides 1.37 acres of community parks, per 1,000 people (Table 6). Based on the service area map (Map 4), there is only one area within the Eugene Planning Area that is not being served by a community (or metropolitan) park. This area is located in the River Road/Santa Clara area. The current plan is to add one park in the Santa Clara area consisting of approximately 70 acres. Smaller acquisitions totaling 20-25 acres could be added to a few of the existing sites. All totaled, an additional 95 acres could be acquired. If this number is added to the existing inventory (219.17 acres) and divided by the projected 2025 population (per 1,000 population), a suggested level of service of 1.5 acres per 1,000 people can be derived.

Comparable standards for community parks range from 1.72 to 8.0 acres per 1,000 people (Table 6). The suggested level of service of 1.5 acres of community parks per 1,000 people is well below this range. Based on this suggested standard, 97.18 acres of additional land will be needed by the year 2025.

### **Natural Area Parks**

Natural areas are managed for recreational use and natural resource values, such as wildlife habitat, water quality, and endangered species protection. They provide opportunities for nature-based recreation and education, such as wildlife viewing, hiking, jogging, bicycling, and nature photography.

The City of Eugene has 27 natural area parks, totaling 1,486.77 total acres. They range in size from 0.28 to 393.83 acres. Examples of natural area parks include Meadowlark Prairie, Spencer Butte, and Delta Ponds. In addition to natural area parks, the City protects almost 800 acres of significant natural resources within other park types, such as neighborhood parks, community parks, metropolitan parks, and linear parks/greenways.

While natural area parks need to be located based on available natural resources, all residents should have some level of access to natural area parks. South Eugene currently has the most acres of natural area parks. The Central and River Road/Santa Clara planning sub-areas have no natural area parks.

Not surprisingly, all 27 of Eugene's natural area parks have significant natural resources (Appendix D). Resource values tended to be greater for larger parks; however, some smaller parks, such as Willow Corner, also had a high score due to their special features. Total scores ranged from 5 to 22. On average, natural area parks had a resource value of 12.5. Natural areas scored lower than metropolitan parks (17.2) and linear parks/greenways (12.7). The number of smaller natural area parks sites may have contributed to this lower score.

Only five of the 13 park amenities evaluated by Parks and Open Space staff were applicable to natural area parks. Three of these – turf, trails, and signage – were in poor to fair condition.

### *Public Involvement Findings/Trends*

- More than half (51.8%) of Community Survey respondents said there should be an equal distribution of natural areas and active parks in Eugene.
- According to the Community Survey, adults aged 18 to 24 and 25 to 34 were more likely than average to support more natural than active parks. At the Eugene Celebration, respondents slightly favored entirely natural parks over entirely active parks.
- Natural areas, however, are used less frequently than most other parks and community facilities. According to the Community Survey, respondents averaged 1.89 per capita visits annually. Youths averaged 3.58 visits annually. Participants in the Multi-Cultural Focus Group also indicated low usage of natural areas.



- Natural area parks support a number of recreation activities that are among the top 20 most popular in Eugene: walking (4), dog walking (8), wildlife watching (11), hiking (13), and bird watching (15).
- *River access for recreation, swimming, and boating* was ranked the second most needed outdoor recreation element in Eugene, according to respondents of the Community Survey and the Eugene Celebration. In the Youth Questionnaire, respondents ranked it first, indicating it is the top facility needed by youth in Eugene.
- Eugene Stakeholders observed that natural areas have value beyond the benefit of recreational use, such as providing significant habitat.
- The Natural Resource and Open Space Focus Group identified a range of benefits provided by natural area parks, including: Improved mental and physical health, habitat protection, community identity, education and recreation, and protection of natural and cultural history.
- Natural areas *provide opportunities to enjoy nature/outdoors* and *protect the natural environment*. These are two of the top three benefits of parks, recreation, and open space, according to respondents from the Community Survey, the Eugene Celebration, and the Speakers Bureau.
- According to respondents at the Eugene Celebration, *purchase more natural areas* is the top priority for all park and open space improvements.
- In an open-ended question, *providing additional natural areas* was the most frequently mentioned individual improvement for all parks, open space, and recreation services, according to Speakers Bureau respondents.
- Eugene needs a strong open space acquisition program, according to participants in the Natural Resource and Open Space Focus Group. They wanted priority sites for acquisition to include Ridgeline sites, farmland, Metro Natural Resource Study sites, the confluence of the Willamette and McKenzie Rivers, and rare and endangered habitat types.
- More than 65% of respondents believe Eugene's natural areas can be improved, according to the Community Survey and Speakers Bureau.
- The top three improvements for natural areas include *provide more passive recreation opportunities, such as trails and benches; improve habitat in existing natural areas and remove invasive species; and acquire more natural areas*, according to respondents in the Community Survey, Eugene Celebration, and Speakers Bureau.
- According to respondents in the Eugene Celebration, riparian areas, wetlands, and forested areas are the types of habitat that really need increased protection and acquisition.
- The Natural Resource and Open Space Focus Group identified the following natural resource priorities: Oak habitat, riparian areas, and remnant native prairies.
- The Maintenance Staff Focus Group specifically noted the need for increased public awareness regarding wetlands and natural areas and continued removal of invasive species from natural area parks.
- Eugene's natural open spaces could be improved by providing additional public information, revising planning and design policies to emphasize natural resource values, and utilizing maintenance practices aimed at enhancing habitat, improving water quality, and minimizing impacts, according to the Natural Resource and Open Space Focus Group.
- Development may limit land available for future parks and natural areas, a concern of key Stakeholders in Eugene.





- Stakeholders in Eugene recognized the need to expand parks and natural areas to keep up with population growth and to ensure that all residents have adequate access.
- Some natural areas in Eugene may be over-used or impacted by humans and animals, according to key Stakeholders. Consequently, the need to expand and protect natural areas is greater.

#### *Potential Partners*

Other providers and organizations with a stake in natural areas include agencies from the county, state, and federal government, including Lane Council of Governments, Lane County Parks, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife. They also include environmental organizations, such as the McKenzie River Trust, The Trust for Public Land, and the Nature Conservancy.

#### *Standards Analysis*

The City currently provides 9.27 acres of natural area park per 1,000 people (Table 6). This level of service does not include the nearly 800 acres of natural area included in other park types, such as neighborhood, community, linear, and metropolitan parks. The need for natural area parks is often based on the availability of local environmentally sensitive lands such as significant habitat, hillsides and wetlands. According to the Metropolitan Natural Resource Study completed by LCOG in 2001, there are roughly 4000 acres of natural resource land in the Eugene area. Projects totaling several thousands of acres have been identified as priority improvements in the regional vision for parks and open space, *Rivers to Ridges* (LCOG, 2003). While it is difficult to ascertain the amount of land that could be included in this category, staff has identified a minimum of approximately 650 acres that could be added to complete significant Ridgeline Trail connections and protect significant waterways.

For purposes of deriving a recommended standard, we will assume an additional 650 acres will be preserved by the year 2025. If this number is added to the existing inventory (1,486.77 acres) and divided by the projected 2025 population, a proposed standard of 10 acres per 1,000 people can be derived. This standard will help the City create a system that includes both active parks and natural areas, since the combined proposed standard for active parks is 10 acres per 1000 people. This does not take into consideration the natural areas that will be preserved now and in the future by other park types. If current patterns of preserving natural areas within other park types continue, another 400 acres would be managed for natural resource values by the year 2025.

Comparable standards for natural area parks range from 6.81 to 14.89 acres per 1,000 population (Table 6). The City of Eugene's proposed standard of 10.0 acres of natural area park per 1,000 people is well within this range. Based on this proposed standard, 622 acres of additional land will be needed by the year 2025. As noted above, other park types also provide significant acres of natural area (over 880 currently). It is assumed that existing and new neighborhood, community, linear/greenway, and metropolitan parks will continue to provide natural areas beyond those in the proposed standard.

#### ***Other Parkland***

In addition to neighborhood parks, community parks, and natural area parks, four other types of parkland are located within the Eugene planning area. These include the following:

- Urban Plazas
- Metropolitan Parks
- Linear Parks/Greenways
- Special Use Facilities



The acquisition of these park types is based on land availability or, in the case of special facilities, is a very specific siting need. To allow the City maximum flexibility in responding to community needs and to take advantage of opportunities that cannot be foreseen today, a standard of 6.8 acres per 1000 people is proposed for all other parkland. Additional acquisitions in the other parkland category will likely include some natural areas, as is the case with existing metropolitan and linear parks/greenways.

### ***Urban Plazas***

Urban plazas provide social gathering space within higher density urban areas. They may include performance space, public art or fountains, and serve both residential and commercial uses. The City of Eugene currently has one urban plaza, measuring 1.1 acres in size, the Park Blocks. Park Block signage was rated in poor condition. All other plaza amenities were in fair or good condition. The Park Blocks contain no significant natural resources, although significant native plantings have been added in recent years as an environmental education effort. Other examples of urban plazas in the area include Broadway Plaza, EWEB Plaza, Oakway Center Plaza, and Erb Memorial Union.

### ***Public Involvement Findings/Trends***

- Urban plazas can *provide opportunities to enjoy nature/outdoors*, which is the most important benefit of parks, recreation services, and open space, according to the respondents of the Community Survey, the Eugene Celebration, and the Speakers Bureau Report.
- The Business Community Focus Group identified Eugene's Park Blocks as an example of community assets that provide economic benefit to Eugene's residents, employers and business owners. The Park Blocks provide the setting for the Saturday Market, Lane County Farmer's Market, and the Eugene Celebration.

### ***Potential Partners***

Private developers may be potential partners in developing urban plazas. Building complexes and urban housing developments create opportunities for rooftop gardens, interior plazas or courtyards, and other open space areas. Although in private ownership, these features are important to the livability of high-density areas, such as nodal development.

### ***Standards Analysis***

The City currently provides 0.01 acres of urban plaza space per 1,000 people (Table 6). Urban plazas provide social and passive recreational opportunities in urban settings, such as downtown commercial districts and neighborhood commercial nodal developments. These types of facilities could be incorporated into future development and/or redevelopment projects throughout the city.

The need for urban plazas is reflected in the proposed combined standard of 6.8 acres per 1,000 people for other parkland. To calculate the overall combined standard, it was estimated that a minimum of one additional urban plaza could be developed in each of the six planning sub-areas. At an average size of 0.5 acres, this will result in a need for approximately three additional acres.

Comparable standards for urban plazas do not exist. Other agencies may include urban plazas in the special use facilities category, which is discussed on the following pages.



### **Metropolitan Parks**

Metropolitan parks are larger parks that provide features and facilities that attract users from the entire Eugene-Springfield metropolitan area or preserve unique cultural and natural areas. Metropolitan parks can accommodate large group activities.

The City of Eugene has six metropolitan parks, totaling 654.45 acres. They include Alton Baker, Hendricks, Maurie Jacobs, Skinner Butte, Washington/Jefferson, and Wayne Morse Ranch. They range in size from 21 to 402.20 acres. Metropolitan park amenities are generally in poor to fair condition. According to the park amenity evaluation, six amenities were reported to be in less than fair condition (<2 on the evaluation): children's play areas, sport fields, trails, planting/shrubs, park signage, and lighting.

Eugene's metropolitan parks are important for active use and for their natural resource value. Active uses are primarily for large events and gatherings, and some sports activities, although only two sites have sport fields. Approximately 67% of the current inventory of metropolitan parks is managed for natural resource values. Five metropolitan parks contain significant natural resources, with natural areas ranging from 15.0 to 292.0 acres (Appendix D). The larger park size, their habitat diversity, and the presence of rare plants, animals, and significant wetlands and waterways are factors that contribute to their higher resource value. According to the natural area evaluation, the average score for metropolitan parks is 17.2 (overall range is from low of 4 to high of 22). This is the highest score for any park type.

Metropolitan Parks serve all residents; however, access to them may vary through the city. Three planning sub-areas, Bethel/Danebo, Willow Creek, and River Road/Santa Clara are poorly served by access to Metropolitan Parks.

#### *Public Involvement Findings/Trends*

- According to the Community Survey and the Youth Questionnaire, metropolitan parks are the fourth most highly used recreation facility, averaging 5.46 per capita visits annually. Youth visits averaged 4.06 visits annually, according to the Youth Questionnaire.
- The age groups most likely to use metropolitan parks frequently are adults aged 18-24 and 55-64.

#### *Potential Partners*

Other providers of area metropolitan parks include Willamalane Park and Recreation District and Lane County.

#### *Standards Analysis*

The City currently provides 4.08 acres of metropolitan parks per 1,000 people (Table 6). In the absence of a community and/or neighborhood park, metropolitan parks can fulfill this function if appropriately developed. These types of parks also contribute to the inventory of natural areas with 436.28 acres of the total 654.45 acres being maintained in its natural state.

The need for metropolitan parks is reflected in the proposed combined standard of 6.8 acres per 1,000 people. Considering the City already has a considerable amount of land allocated in this category, it is assumed the current acreage is sufficient to meet the present day and future needs of the Eugene residents.

Comparable standards for metropolitan parks do not exist. Very few communities use this park classification type, and some communities use a classification such as "large urban" or "regional" to describe metropolitan parks.



### **Linear Parks/Greenways**

Linear parks and greenways provide connectivity between open space areas and provide public access to trail-oriented activities, which may include walking, running, biking, or skating. Linear parks may also provide neighborhood recreation facilities where adequate space is available. These parks may contain developed areas and multi-use trails or may consist entirely of natural areas.

The City has 13 linear parks/greenways, totaling 201.13 acres. Typically they are either part of the Amazon Creek system or the Willamette River Greenway. They range from 3.9 to 54.0 acres in size. The park amenity evaluation found seven amenities (of 13 possible) applicable to linear parks/greenways: turf, parking, park structures, trails, signage, site furnishings, and lighting. All seven were in poor to fair condition, with no amenities in any linear park/greenway rated in good condition.

Linear parks/greenways report a high average resource value in comparison to other park types (Appendix D). Their average total score of 12.7 is second only to metropolitan parks (overall range is from low of 4 to high of 22). According to the natural area evaluation, all 13 linear parks/greenways contain significant resource value, with natural acreage ranging from 2.0 to 54.0 acres. Many of these sites contain or are adjacent to wetlands and open waterways.

### *Public Involvement Findings/Trends*

- Multi-purpose trails are the second most highly used park and community facility, averaging 5.57 per capita visits annually, according to the Community Survey.
- According to the Youth Questionnaire, youth use multi-purpose trails less frequently. Trails ranked fifth out of 8 facilities, averaging 4.05 visits annually.
- According to Community Survey respondents, the top outdoor recreation facilities needed in Eugene today are *multi-purpose trails connecting community facilities for biking, walking, etc.*
- In an open-ended question, *improving trails* was the second most frequently mentioned individual improvement for all parks, open space, and recreation services, according to Speakers Bureau respondents.
- The Maintenance Staff Focus Group specifically noted the need for improved trails, adequate trail drainage, better trailhead signage, and increased public information and education regarding trails and trail usage.
- Linear parks/greenways support a number of recreation activities that are among the top 20 most popular in Eugene: Walking (4), dog walking (8), bicycling for pleasure (9), jogging/running (12), hiking (13), and bicycling for commute (20).

### *Potential Partners*

Agencies that own rights-of-way, such as Lane County, Oregon Department of Transportation, Bonneville Power Administration, Eugene Water and Electric Board, and the railroads may be potential partners for linear park/greenway development. Private property owners may consider easements to allow connectivity, and the City of Eugene's bicycle program is also an important partner.

### *Standards Analysis*

The City currently provides 1.25 acres of linear park/greenway per 1,000 people (Table 6). This type of park also contributes to the inventory of natural areas with 190.73 acres of the total 201.13 maintained in its natural state. In some, instances, this type of park can also serve the neighborhood park need, if appropriately developed.



The need for linear parks/greenways is reflected in the combined standard of 6.8 acres per 1,000 people. Linear park/greenway needs are usually based on the presence of linear features, such as utility corridors, waterways, etc. These park types can accommodate a wide range of functions including habitat preservation, flood control and trail development. The City already maintains a significant amount of land in this category. However, it seems likely that the existing inventory could be doubled given the demand for trails and the goal of creating an interconnected system of parks.

For the linear park/greenway category, it is assumed that an additional 200 acres will be secured by the year 2025 to contribute to the combined park standard. Additional lands could be preserved along waterways and other similar linear features.

Comparable standards for linear parks/greenways range from 0.14 to 1.0 acre per 1,000 people. Eugene's higher standard is based on the goal of connectivity, and the availability of linear resources, such as the Amazon Creek and the Willamette River.

### ***Special Use Facilities***

Special use facilities have unique features, historical significance, and/or specialized functions. Community centers, senior centers, pools, golf courses, botanical gardens, amphitheaters, historic sites, composting facilities, and City-owned facilities on school property are classified as special use facilities.

The City has 23 special use facilities, totaling 130.71 acres. Many of these facilities are located within other park types or on school district property; therefore, their acreage is not included in this classification for freestanding facilities. Special use facilities range in size from 0.75 to 92.0 acres. They tend to be in good condition. When evaluated, only lighting and signage appeared to be in less than fair condition (<2). However, seven more facilities had an average score of 2.0. Slight deterioration would reduce their overall rating to "poor."

Three sites for special use facilities contain significant natural resources that were not already noted: Prefontaine Memorial Park, Bloomberg, and Laurelwood Golf Course (Appendix D). On average, these special use facilities had a resource value of 10.7, with scores ranging from 7 to 13 (overall range is from low of 4 to high of 22).

### ***Public Involvement Findings/Trends***

Section III of this report contains public involvement findings and trends related to specific recreation amenities and facilities, such as gardens, golf courses, performance spaces, pools, and community/senior centers. The following findings relate to a multi-use sports complex, which combines a variety of recreation amenities and facilities in one location. Such a facility would be classified as a special use facility.

- A sports complex is the most needed sports facility in Eugene, according to 24.7% of the respondents to the Community Survey.
- A multi-use sports complex could combine many of the recreation activities among the top 30 for youths in Eugene: basketball (5), exercising/aerobics (6), jogging/running (7), outdoor swimming (8), indoor swimming (12), soccer (14), football (15), skateboarding (23), tennis (28), and baseball (30).
- Local sport organizations indicated that participation in organized sports is growing, and there is a need for more athletic facilities in Eugene to accommodate the demand.
- Competitive and recreational sports are the types of recreation activities most needed by middle school and high school youth in Eugene, according to responses to the Youth Questionnaire. Middle school and high school youth are the two groups most in need of better recreation services, as noted in the Community Survey, Eugene Celebration, and Speakers Bureau Report.



- The top four sport facilities most needed by youth include swimming pools, a sports complex, outdoor basketball courts, and turf fields. Demand has also been noted for additional all-weather facilities for basketball and skateboarding.
- Local recreation providers noted that adults are participating in active recreation longer in the Eugene area. However, more sport opportunities are available for youths than for adults, according to the results of the Organized Sports Questionnaire.
- The demand for athletic facilities by both youths and adults is high. There is an increase in youth organizations using fields and gyms during "adult time" hours.
- According to the Community Survey, adults 18-24 were less likely than the overall community to participate in City-sponsored recreation activities. This age group is likely to be attracted by affordable, competitive or recreational sports, requiring available athletic fields and facilities.
- The need for drop-in recreational and competitive sports was mentioned as a need in several public involvement efforts.
- Building a City-owned sports complex to provide more sport opportunities was a priority service improvement identified at the LRCS All-staff Workshop.
- Organized Sport providers indicated a need for the following: Improvements to existing fields, the development of a sports field complex, an increase in fields for soccer, rugby, football, disc golf, baseball, and softball, and the construction of a gymnasium/field house.
- According to the Business Community Focus Group, a recreational niche market for Eugene should be sought, including building a destination sports facility, such as a multi-sports complex and tournament locations, to draw a regional or national audience.
- According to Community Survey results, participation in traditional team sports (soccer, basketball, football, softball, baseball) is lower in Eugene than the Northwest Average. Basketball was the only team sport to appear on the list of top 20 preferred activities for Eugene, and respondents wanted to participate more in basketball than they currently do. Survey results indicate that participation in golf, tennis, and both indoor and outdoor volleyball are higher than the Northwest Average.
- National trends exhibited growth in many field athletics and sports from 2001 to 2002: Touch football (8.6%), baseball (5.1%), basketball (3%), soccer (4.7%), and softball (3.2%) (National Sporting Goods Association, 2003).
- The SCORP identifies a statewide shortage in existing team sport facilities and a high demand for them. Oregon has declared a statewide objective to increase the number of baseball, softball, football, and soccer fields where needed (OPRD, 2003).
- Local trends exhibit growth in many field athletics and sports. Participation rates in the Eugene area from 1987-2002 have increased for the following: Football/Rugby (152.3%), baseball (130.6%), soccer (78.3%), outdoor basketball (31.2%), and softball (15.6%) (OPRD, 2003).
- Due to the revenue generated, athletics is one of the most cost effective programs offered by the City. Availability of fields and gymnasiums may limit the growth of these activities.

#### *Potential Partners*

The potential for partnerships involving special facilities varies according to the type of facility. Regional facility partners may include other providers, such as River Road Park and Recreation District and Willamalane Park and Recreation District. Private developers and sport providers, such as KidSports, may partner on sport facilities and complexes. Non-profit organizations may partner on projects related to historical and environmental issues. For example, the Shelton-McMurphey-Johnson House is operated by a friends group.





### *Standards Analysis*

The City currently provides 0.81 acres of special use area per 1,000 population (Table 6). The need for special use areas is reflected in the combined standard of 6.8 acres per 1,000 population. The actual need is typically based on the number of facilities located independently and not included in other types of park areas. To accommodate these types of facilities it is estimated that a minimum of 80 acres is needed. This would provide adequate acreage for a sports park(s), additional aquatic facilities, and additional indoor recreation space. Comparable standards for special use facilities range from 0.14 to 1.0 acre per 1,000 people.

### **F. General Park Coverage**

Map 5 shows park coverage, including all park types, with a uniform half-mile service area buffer. Underserved areas within each of the six planning sub-areas are shown. These areas should be a high priority for future park acquisition, since they are currently not served by parks of any type.

### **G. Analysis by Planning Sub-area**

A complete inventory of City parks and natural areas by planning sub-area is included in Appendix C. This section presents sub-area findings for parks and open space.

#### ***Bethel-Danebo***

- Park acreage in this sub-area is fairly well matched to the current population.
- The Comprehensive Plan will need to address growth predicted for this area.
- The Bethel-Danebo sub-area has no metropolitan parks.
- Echo Hollow Pool is the only special use facility in this sub-area.
- The area is well served by natural area parks and linear parks/greenways, in terms of acreage available. Access needs to be addressed and improved.
- The West Eugene Wetlands is a significant component of this planning sub-area.

#### ***City Central***

- There are few neighborhood, community, and natural area parks in this sub-area. Access to these types of facilities in other planning sub-areas needs to be addressed.
- The City Central sub-area is well served by metropolitan parks and special use facilities.
- Density needs to be addressed in this sub-area, possibly with additional urban plazas.
- Downtown Eugene and the University of Oregon significantly impact park and open space character in this planning sub-area.

#### ***River Road/Santa Clara***

- Currently, this area is poorly served by all park types, except for linear parks/greenways via the Willamette River Greenway system.
- The acreage for neighborhood parks is adequate, but very little of this acreage has been developed with recreation amenities.
- The inventory data does not recognize the benefits of Emerald Park and other facilities managed by the River Road Park and Recreation District.
- Plans are currently underway to acquire a community park to serve the Santa Clara area.
- There is extremely limited access to natural areas.



### ***South Eugene***

- This sub-area has no real area of deficiency.
- There are more than adequate number of parks, especially natural areas parks and special use facilities.
- The South Eugene planning sub-area has the highest amount of total parkland, total developed acreage, and natural area acreage.
- The ridgeline system is a significant park resource in this planning sub-area. Access to this resource should continue to be improved.

### ***Willakenzie***

- This sub-area has significant deficiencies in all areas except for community and metropolitan parks.
- There are very few natural area parks, linear parks/greenways, and special use facilities.
- Although the number of neighborhood parks is adequate, several of the sites are small and therefore total acreage is low.
- The total acreage of parks and open space is fairly well matched to the current population.
- Alton Baker Park, Willamette East Bank, and Delta Ponds have significant impact on park character in this planning sub-area.

### ***Willow Creek***

- There are no metropolitan parks and special use facilities in this sub-area.
- Willow Creek has adequate acreage and sites in natural area parks and linear parks/greenways (sites in the West Eugene Wetlands). Access to these sites, as well as additional recreation and interpretive amenities, should be important improvements.
- There is adequate acreage for neighborhood parks; however, access is limited and development is needed to provide additional recreation amenities.
- Community park service is provided by the Churchill Sports Park.
- Only one percent of the total acreage has been developed with recreation features.
- West Eugene Wetlands, recently acquired Ridgeline properties, and Amazon Creek are all significant components of this planning sub-area.

## **H. Assessment of Need for Recreation Amenities and Facilities**

The Parks and Open Space Analysis describes the community's need for outdoor recreation amenities, recreation facilities, and natural area amenities within the parks and open space system. The following are addressed in the analysis:

### ***Outdoor Recreation Amenities***

- Basketball courts
- Botanical gardens
- Children's play areas
- Community gardens
- Disc golf courses
- Dog parks
- Golf courses





- Insert map 5 – **FRONT**



Insert map 5 - **BACK**



- Performance space
- Picnic areas (reservable)
- Sand volleyball
- Skate parks
- Soccer
- Softball/baseball
- Tennis courts
- Wading pools/spray parks

### ***Natural Area Amenities***

- Interpretive facilities
- Multi-use trails
- Mountain bike trails
- Pedestrian trails
- Running trails
- Trail heads

### ***Recreation Facilities***

- Gymnasiums
- Indoor and outdoor swimming pools
- Community centers and senior centers

Table 7 summarizes the proposed level of service and anticipated need for amenities and facilities in Eugene. To establish a new level of service for Eugene, the current level of service was compared to Oregon average standards and historic NRPA standards. It should be noted that for many of the amenities, there are no comparable standards available. Community demand was considered in developing a proposed level of service for each amenity, which is expressed in units per population. In some cases, such as sports facilities, mathematical models provide guidance and are used to assess need. School district amenities have not been included in the calculation of need for a number of amenities they commonly provide, including basketball courts, children's play areas, community gardens, sand volleyball, soccer, softball/baseball, tennis courts, and gymnasiums. This is due to the difficulty in establishing a clear equivalent between facilities provided by the City that are accessible to the entire community, and those that may provide a lower level of service based on access, schedule, or condition. However, in each case, the school districts' current inventory of these amenities has been provided as a tool in estimating the total need and the availability of existing resources. The proposed levels of service for each of the amenities outlined below are intended to serve as tools to address future needs, rather than be adopted as formal standards.

The inventory contained in Appendix B was used as a basis for determining the current level of service. Table 8 provides a summary of amenities provided by other agencies in the Eugene area, including agencies such as Lane County, EWEB, and local school districts. These amenities also contribute to the inventory of recreation amenities and, to a varying degree, are available to the Eugene residents.



## IX. RECREATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES ANALYSIS

This section contains an overview of the Recreation Programs and Services Analysis completed as part of the PROS Plan Community Needs Assessment in July 2003. It describes the current level of recreation services in Eugene and provides a summary of needs. The Recreation Programs and Services Analysis is available in its entirety from the Parks and Open Space Division.

### A. Purpose

The Recreation Program and Services Analysis reviews current programs offered by the City of Eugene through the Library, Recreation, and Cultural Services (LRCS) Department and through the Parks and Open Space (POS) Division. In this analysis, potential strategies are identified for improvements over the 20-year span of the Comprehensive Plan. These strategies will be refined through further staff, MAC, and community input and will be incorporated into the Park, Recreation, and Open Space Comprehensive Plan.

### B. Methodology

All results of the public involvement findings were used in the development of this analysis. In addition, the following sources were consulted:

- **Eugene Population, Demographic and Economic Trends (LCOG, 2003):** This population trend analysis was prepared as part of the PROS Comprehensive Plan update.
- **Oregon Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2003-2007 (SCORP):** The SCORP is a 5-year statewide plan for recreation that enables the State to maintain eligibility for federal Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) monies. Oregon's SCORP includes valuable information about recreation trends and participation in Oregon, and it provides detail about different geographic regions of the state.
- **National Sporting Goods Association (NSGA):** NSGA is the national association for sporting goods retailers. NSGA conducts an annual nationwide study about recreation participation. Current and historical participation information is available on NSGA's website and as printed publications.
- **MIG Average:** MIG's maintains a database on current recreation participation. The MIG Average is continually updated and reflects the average recreation participation in the past 15 communities surveyed by MIG, including the City of Eugene.

### C. Service Overview

This section discusses the benefits of parks and recreation, the programs and services provided, changing population trends, economic benefits, partnerships, and program revenue and cost. The following key findings emerged:

#### *Benefits of Recreation*

- Residents think that **parks, recreation services, and open space are important to Eugene's quality of life**. According to the results of the Community Survey, the Eugene Celebration Questionnaire, and the Speakers Bureau Questionnaire, more than 94% of residents indicated that parks and recreation were either important or very important to quality of life.
- In addition, over 96% of survey and questionnaire respondents agree that **parks, recreation and open space provide benefits to the community**. These benefits can be used as a guide to planning and evaluating recreation programs and services. The most important benefits cited by members of the community are:
  - Provide opportunities to enjoy nature/outdoors;
  - Connect people together, building stronger families and neighborhoods;
  - Protect the natural environment;
  - Improve health and wellness; and
  - Promote youth development.



Insert **TABLE 7**



Table 7 back



Facility	# Provided by Others							
	U of O	EWEB	LC Parks	LC Fair	WPRD	RRPRD	4J	52
TOTAL by Others								
OUTDOOR RECREATION AMENITIES								
Basketball - Full Court	6				9	1	0	16
Basketball - Half Court	4				6	1	30	52
Botanical Gardens			1			0	0	1
Children's Play Areas			1		18	1	17	44
Community Gardens					1	0	1	2
Disc Golf Courses						0	0	0
Dog Parks					0	0	0	0
Golf Courses						0	0	0
Performance Space	2					0	0	2
Sand Volleyball	1				2	0	3	6
Skate Parks					1	1	0	2
Soccer	1				4	0	52	67
Softball/Baseball	1				13	0	46	74
Tennis Courts	2				12	0	4	18
Wading Pools/Spray Parks		1			0	0	0	1
Reservable Picnic Areas			8			1	0	9
TRAILS (in miles)								
Trails, Multi-Use					3.50	0	0	3.50
Trails, Mountain Bike						0	0	0
Trails, Running	1					1	0	2
Trails, Pedestrian						0	0	0
RECREATION FACILITIES								
Gymnasiums				1	1		37	51
Indoor and Outdoor Swimming Pools					2	1		3
Community Centers/Senior Centers					3	1		4

Table 8: Amenities Provided by Others

Key to Acronyms:

U of O	University of Oregon
EWEB	Eugene Water & Electric Board
LC Parks	Lane County Parks Division
LC Fair	Lane County Fair (Lane Events Center)
WPRD	Willamalane Park and Recreation District
RRPRD	River Road Park and Recreation District
4J	Eugene School District 4J
52	Bethel School District 52

### Services Provided

- The City of Eugene offers recreation programs and services through the **Library, Recreation, and Cultural Services (LRCS) Department** and the **Parks and Open Space (POS) Division**. LRCS provides a wide variety of recreation programs and special events, with an emphasis on youth programs. POS offers volunteer opportunities to improve the City's parks, open space and streets. In addition, POS administers the City's community garden program.
- The City of Eugene recreation, cultural services and parks and open space divisions serve more than **800,000** attendees each year (Table 9). Aquatics has the highest percentage of total participation, followed by Youth and Family.

Service Area	Attendance	% of Total Attendance
LRCS – Aquatics	286,320	34.9%
LRCS – Athletics	102,890	12.6%
LRCS – Seniors	37,000	4.5%
LRCS – Specialized Recreation	13,500	1.7%
LRCS – Youth and Family (Includes Outdoor/Environmental Programs)	184,750	22.5%
LRCS – Community Services	9,630	1.2%
LRCS – Hult Center/Cuthbert Amphitheater	183,112	22.3%
POS – combined programs <sup>1</sup>	2,542	.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>819,744</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 9: Program Participation, Fiscal Year 2004 Projections

- Eugene has **a high level of program participation**. Well over half (57.2%) of Community Survey respondents have participated in a City of Eugene recreation program or special event during the past year. This is much higher than most communities, where program participation averages about 30% of the population.
- Eugene citizens want the City to continue in its role as a **major provider of recreation services**. When asked what role the City should have in providing these services, 70.2% of Community Survey respondents said that the City should be a primary provider of services with some services provided by partner agencies.
- Community members think that **more recreation programs** should be offered. About 61% of Community Survey respondents and over 75% of Speakers Bureau questionnaire respondents said that recreation programs should be increased.
- According to the Community Survey and other public involvement efforts, **middle school and high school youth are the community's top priorities** for program improvements.
- Due to budget cuts over the years, Eugene currently **offers limited adult programming and focuses on youth programming**.





### *Changing Population Trends*

- The **current population** in the PROS planning area **is expected to increase** from 160,469 to 210,900 in 2025, increasing the demand for recreation services (LCOG, 2003).
- The **55 to 64 year old age group will experience one of the greatest increases** as the leading edge of the baby boomers enters this age category (LCOG, 2003).
- **Eugene is increasing in diversity**, and programs and facilities need to be responsive to a changing customer base by providing more programs that meet the needs of people from diverse cultures, providing staff training in understanding diversity, and by developing a more diverse workforce. For example, the Hispanic population in Eugene more than doubled during the 1990s, and more residents identify themselves as Native American than in 1990 (LCOG, 2003).
- Family composition also has changed over the last 30 years. There is **a lower percentage of married couple families and a smaller household size** in Eugene today (LCOG, 2003). This increases the need for childcare and creates a need for family activities that celebrate all types of Eugene families.

### *Economic Benefits*

- The City of Eugene provides many job opportunities to residents in the area of recreation programs. **Recreation and Cultural Services employee over 79.75 full-time and over 735 temporary employees**, creating a work force of about 350 during the peak season (Table 10). Many of the seasonal staff are youth or young adults who learn job skills through their employment with the City of Eugene.

Service Area	FY 04 FTEs
LRCS – Aquatics	9.75
LRCS – Athletics	3.25
LRCS – Seniors	5.25
LRCS – Specialized Recreation	5.0
LRCS – Youth and Family (Includes Outdoor/Environmental)	11.50
LRCS – Partnerships for Youth	3.00
LRCS – Youth & School Service Levy	0.50
LRCS – Hult/Cuthbert	25.50
LRCS – Administration	7.00
LRCS – Recreation Administration	6.00
POS – Combined programs	3.00 <sup>1</sup>
<b>Total</b>	<b>79.75</b>

Table 10: Park and Recreation Staffing, Fiscal Year 2004

<sup>1</sup> Includes VIP Coordinator, Stream Team Coordinator, and NeighborWoods Coordinator. Other POS staff also work on programs, but time varies and is not reflected in this table.



- **Volunteers donated** a documented **28,390 hours** of time in fiscal year 2003 (Table 11). This is equivalent to the work of 13.65 full-time equivalent employees. Volunteer opportunities with the City of Eugene allow residents to use their leisure time to improve our community and the environment or contribute to the health and well-being of their neighbors.

Service Area	Hours
LRCS – Aquatics	--
LRCS – Athletics	--
LRCS – Outdoor/Environmental	273
LRCS – Seniors	4,911
LRCS – Specialized Recreation	3,486
LRCS – Youth and Family	3,345
LRCS – Community Services	534
LRCS – Hult/Cuthbert	7,000
POS – NeighborWoods	1,393
POS – Stream Team	3,248
POS – Community Gardens	--
POS – Volunteers In Parks	4,200
<b>Total</b>	<b>28,390</b>

Table 11: Volunteer Hours in Recreation Programs, Fiscal Year 2003

#### *Other Providers*

- In addition to the City of Eugene, there are a variety of recreation and social service program providers in the Eugene area. **Out-of-school programs** and **youth development services** have the greatest number of service providers in the Eugene area. Fewer providers serve adults, people with disabilities and people from diverse cultures. Appendix E contains data about the services provided in the Eugene area by 47 program providers.
- According to focus groups and interviews, the City of Eugene is viewed positively for its **current partnership approach** to providing recreation programs and services.
- The City has the opportunity to continue **to expand partnership efforts** to meet community needs and take advantage of its unique strengths.
- According to focus groups and interviews, there is a need for **more coordination among all service providers**.

#### *Program Revenue and Cost*

- Generally, recreation programs are funded through a combination of general funds and user fees. To a lesser extent, grants or corporate sponsorships can be a source of funding. Eugene has used serial levies as a major source of funding. Up until the late 1960's and 1970's, programs were often offered free of charge. With overall decreases in public funding and more constraints to increased property taxes, **recreation agencies** across the country now **rely more on user fees** for program funding.



- The **overall revenue rate** for recreation services in the City of Eugene is **33%**, excluding the Hult Center/Cuthbert Amphitheater service area, which is about average.
- The **Athletics service area has the highest revenue rate** (Table 12). The City's goal for the Athletics program to recover 100% of direct costs through fees.

Service Area	FY 2004 Revenue	FY 2004 Expenditure	Revenue Rate
Aquatics	\$824,476	\$2,533,236	32.6%
Athletics (includes Public Works)	\$443,257	\$523,142	84.7%
Seniors	\$156,163	\$682,451	22.9%
Specialized Recreation	\$97,209	\$589,997	16.5%
Youth & Family (includes Outdoor and youth levy funds)	\$1,233,505	\$3,805,791	32.4%
Community Services	\$3,000	\$217,946	0.2%

Table 12: Revenue Rates by Service Area, Fiscal Year 2004

- **Aquatics has the second highest revenue rate.** Fees and program revenue recover just over a third of the cost of providing aquatics services.
- Aquatics and athletics have one of **the lowest net costs per visit** of all the program areas (Table 13).

Service Area	Attendance	Net Cost/Attendee
Aquatics	286,320	\$5.97
Athletics	102,890	\$0.78
Community Arts and Services	NA	
Senior Program	37,000	\$14.22
Specialized Recreation	13,500	\$36.50
Youth & Family Recreation Services (includes Outdoor and Levy Funds)	184,750	\$13.93

Table 13: Net Cost per Visit, FY04, LRCS

*Notes:*

- While Aquatics has one of the lowest cost per attendee, its total net cost to the program is one of the highest. This is due to of the large number of users. As a means of comparison, the cost per visit for aquatics at the Willamalane Park and Recreation District is \$2.97.
  - Athletics is one of the most cost effective programs because its cost per attendee is the lowest and its subsidy amount is the least of all of the service areas in LRCS.
- There is a **growing income disparity** in Oregon and **a demand for free or low cost programs** that cannot be met by the current scholarship fund. Cost was identified as a barrier to participation to youth, seniors, people with disabilities and individuals from diverse cultures.
  - A variety of **strategies are used** by park and recreation agencies **to set program fees**. Generally, policies are based on the priority of the program area, community expectations regarding fees and charges, and trends in the field of recreation. For example, if serving teens is a high community priority, lower fees may be set to increase use and make programs accessible.



- Often fees and charges cover the majority of the cost for adult programs and athletics. **Programs for youth, seniors, and individuals with disabilities are frequently highly subsidized.** Most aquatic programs are highly subsidized.
- Agencies often **design some programs to generate a profit**, such as special events and golf. Sometimes this profit is earmarked for the operation of the profit center. It can also be returned to the general fund to subsidize less profitable programs that are highly valued by the community.
- City of Eugene recreation **programs have become increasingly dependent on short-term serial levies for funding.** This has made the long-term stability of programs uncertain.
- The City of Eugene can continue to ensure that low-income residents have access to programs by **improving and expanding the scholarship fund.**
- The City should continue to set **cost recovery goals** for each program area, **based on community values.**
- More **revenue generating programs** could be considered to generate funds.
- A **long-term financial plan** for the delivery of recreation services is needed to ensure program stability.

#### D. Program Analysis

In the analysis of recreation programs and services, the following key findings emerged:

- In FY 03, Eugene provided a **wide variety of programs and special events**, with a particular **emphasis on youth programs.** Through LRCS and POS, there were over 7,700 recreation activities and services offered to the citizens of Eugene.
- **Program strengths** identified by the LRCS staff at the All-Staff workshop include:
  - Program variety and diversity;
  - Specific programs, including the Hult Center and summer concerts, specialized recreation and inclusion services, outdoor programs and youth programs;
  - Some outstanding recreation and cultural facilities (Library, Amazon pool, Hult Center, bike/jogging paths);
  - Affordability, despite budget cuts;
  - Responsiveness to customers and community need; and
  - Excellent, professional, committed staff.
- The Recreation Programs and Services Analysis evaluates the need for recreation services in each program area currently provided by LRCS and POS. Based on anticipated population growth and current demand for services, there are many areas of need, including:
  - Family programs;
  - Special events;
  - Community gardening;
  - Concerts in the parks;
  - Culturally diverse programming;
  - Intergenerational and traditional age-group programming;
  - Active programming for seniors (outdoor/fitness);
  - Afterschool programs for elementary and middle school youth;
  - Outdoor programs;
  - Inclusion support for people with specialized needs;
  - Aquatics programs (swimming instruction, fitness, junior lifeguards, recreational swim);
  - Volunteer programs, such as Volunteer in Parks;
  - Youth mentorship and job training; and
  - Facilities, such as community centers, and staffing to support programming expansions.



- **Expanding programs in some areas**, such as aquatics, community center programs and athletics, **may be limited by available recreation facilities**.
- Programs such as **concerts in the park, community gardens and outdoor programs** are in high demand and **could be expanded without significant capital improvements**.
- Many LRCS and POS programs serve youth. **Youth, especially teens, are the highest priority for increased services**, according to the Community Survey and other public involvement findings.
- The current collaboration between LRCS and community partners to serve youth is successful. This **collaboration could be expanded** to a partnership **to develop a long-term, comprehensive youth development strategy** for Eugene.
- The growth of the senior population will increase demand for these services. In addition, the **need for specialized recreation will increase** due to the fact that we are living longer and the incidence of disability increases with age. By age 65, over 42% of the Eugene population has a disability (U.S. Census, 2000).
- The City of Eugene needs to determine its role in **providing services for adults**.
- The **benefits most desired by the community can serve as a guide to programming planning and expansion**:
  - Provide opportunities to enjoy nature/outdoors;
  - Connect people together, building stronger families and neighborhoods;
  - Protect the natural environment;
  - Improve health and wellness; and
  - Promote youth development.
- **POS volunteer programs could be expanded** given the demand for outdoor activities and the local interest in protecting the environment.
- The Recreation Programs and Services Analysis **evaluates the demand for 50 recreation activities** based on the results of the Community Survey and Youth Questionnaire. Although less reliable statistically, these results are also available by age group. This demand assessment can be used as a guide for program development.
- **LRCS and POS should coordinate** more closely to develop and market programs, track program participation and conduct program evaluation.
- **Self-initiated activities** should be promoted in addition to traditional programmed opportunities.

#### **E. Public Outreach and Information**

The following key findings emerged:

- LRCS currently uses **all common forms of marketing** to various degrees for recreation programs, such as flyers, seasonal program guides, television and radio ads, etc. Information about programs is also distributed through local schools. The City of Eugene also maintains a comprehensive website that includes web pages for both LRCS and POS.
- Marketing efforts should be expanded to ensure that **information is accessible** to residents of **diverse cultures and abilities**.
- The current **system of program evaluation** could be tailored to track the outcomes produced by programs and services.



## X. FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

### A. Purpose

The section contains a summary of the Baseline Financial Analysis completed as part of the PROS Plan Community Needs Assessment in September 2003. It presents key findings related to the analysis of the park and recreation services operating budget and an overview of the Capital Funding Program and other programs that help fund parks, recreation, and open space services in Eugene. The Baseline Financial Analysis is available in its entirety from the Park and Open Space Division.

### B. Key Findings

- The **cost of park, recreation, and open space services** in Eugene is allocated in the City budget to **three different service areas**. These include Cultural/Recreation services, Parks and Open Space, Public Buildings and Facilities. The cost of maintaining recreation buildings and facilities is also included in each of the first three service areas.
- The **City's allocation to park and recreation services** (per capita cost) is about **average** when compared to other communities studied by MIG (approximately 50 communities).
- Due to the passage of the Parks and Open Space bond in 1998, the **annual capital budget for parks and open space increased** from about \$1 million annually in 1997 to an average of \$5.5 million annually over the last three years.
- **Other sources of funding** include System Development Charges, grants, donations, exchanges of property, and partnerships.

### C. Analysis of the Operating Budget

The City of Eugene funds nearly all of its park and recreation services through either the annual operating budget or the capital budget. The operating budget primarily funds daily operating costs such as labor, maintenance, supplies and other services. The capital budget primarily funds acquisition, construction, and associated planning and design.

#### *Total Operating Budget*

The operating budget for all park and recreation services in the City of Eugene is found in three separate budget categories: Cultural/Recreation services, Parks and Open Space, Public Buildings and Facilities. In this analysis, an attempt was made to describe the total cost of combined services; however, some service areas managed by LRCS are not directly related to recreation services, such as the Library, the Hult Center, and the Cuthbert Amphitheater. As a result, some service areas listed in the City budget were excluded from this analysis.

Shown in Table 14 is the total cost of park and recreation services as defined above since 1999.

#### *Relationship to the General Fund*

Park and recreation services are funded within the City's General Fund, which receives its revenue primarily from property taxes, but also includes grants, fees and charges. In Eugene the total 2004 General Fund for the City as a whole is expected to be about 35% of the total City-wide Operating Budget.

One means of measuring the level of financial support for park and recreation services within a city government agency is to compare the budget of park and recreation services with the General Fund budget or the overall operating budget. In FY 04, park and recreation services, as defined above in Eugene, will account for about 3.7% of the City's total operating budget and 10.6% of the General Fund budget. This ratio is in line with other communities studied by MIG.



Fiscal Year	Total Operating Budget <sup>1</sup>	Percent of Change
1999 (Actual)	\$8,137,771	
2000 (Actual)	\$9,134,084	12.2%
2001 (Actual)	\$9,412,837	3.1%
2002 (Actual)	\$10,480,574	11.3%
2003 (Budget)	\$12,356,102	17.9%
2004 (Budget)	\$12,572,402	1.8%

Table 14: Total Park and Recreation Services Operating Budget, FY 1999-2004, City of Eugene

<sup>1</sup> Includes Parks and Open Space, Facility Maintenance, and Cultural/ Recreation services. Excludes the Hult Center, Cuthbert Amphitheater, and Library Services.

Notes about Table 14:

- The budget increase has varied considerably since 1999, ranging as high as 17.9% to a low of 1.8%.
- Increases in 2002 and 2003 are due to the passage of the operating levies.

#### *Operating Budget by Service Area*

There are three separate service areas associated with the overall program of park and recreation services in Eugene:

- Library, Recreation and Cultural Services
- Parks and Open Space
- Public Buildings and Facilities

Table 15 accounts for the service areas where operating data can be broken out. A detailed breakdown of costs, revenue, participation and net cost is shown in a spreadsheet found in the Baseline Financial Analysis Report. Maintenance costs for public buildings and facilities are included in the FY 04 budget shown in Table 15 for both Cultural/Recreation and Parks and Open Space.

#### *Service Cost Per Capita*

One means of analyzing the cost of park and recreation services is to make a comparison between the operating budget and the population of the community served. This ratio is expressed as the *gross cost per capita*. This method is one way of easily identifying the extent of a park and recreation program and is also a way of comparing similar communities. However, this method doesn't take into account the efficiency of a program, by reflecting the net cost after revenue is deducted from the overall cost. Therefore, a better method of identifying cost is the *net cost per capita*, which reflects the true costs and is what the taxpayer must support. Since the City produces significant amounts of revenue from its fees and charges, the net cost per capita is a truer picture of service cost.

Table 16 shows the net and gross costs per capita for selected agencies in the Northwest, including FY 02 and FY 04 for Eugene.



Service Area	FY 2004 Budget	Percent of LRCS	Percent of Total
<i>Cultural/Recreation Services</i>			
Aquatics	\$2,533,236	28.7%	
Athletics	\$523,142	5.9%	
Community Services	\$225,446	2.5%	
Senior Program	\$732,255	8.3%	
Specialized Recreation	\$589,997	6.6%	
Youth & Family Services	\$3,805,791	42.9%	
Administration	\$451,623	5.1%	
<b>Subtotal, Cultural/Recreation Services</b>	<b>\$8,861,490</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>67.9%</b>
<i>Parks and Open Space</i>	<i>\$4,184,990</i>		<i>32.1%<sup>1</sup></i>
<b>Total, Park And Recreation Services</b>	<b>\$13,046,480</b>		

Table 15: Budget by Service Area, FY 04, City of Eugene, Total Park and Recreation Services

<sup>1</sup> Percent of Parks and Open Space budget compared to the total park and recreation services budget. Park and Open Space budget excludes Urban Forestry, street median maintenance, Stormwater and Wetland Management.

*Notes about Table 15:*

- Administration costs have been reduced by 47% to reflect proportionate share of costs attributed to the Hult Center, Cuthbert Amphitheater, and Library Services.
- Facility maintenance costs associated with buildings and facilities are included within LRCS and POS.
- A portion of the Youth and Family Services budget is funded from a local option levy. See page 11 for further discussion of this funding mechanism.
- The budget for the Outdoor/Environmental program has been moved into Youth and Family Services in FY 04.

## D. Capital Funding Programs

### *Capital Funding History*

Table 17 shows an overview of the park and open space capital funding history. From FY 92 through FY 96, capital spending was less than \$200,000 annually and funded primarily through the General Fund. This resulted in few park and open space improvements. From FY 97 through FY 99, the Park and Open Space capital expenditures increased to over \$1 million annually, primarily due to an increase in Park System Development Charges (SDCs). Over the past four years, the Park and Open space bond measure has provided a significant source of funding for capital improvements. The bond measure has contributed over \$15 million to the capital budget since 1999. Other funding sources, such as grants, were a minor source of funding prior to FY 00. Grants and other sources have contributed over \$175,000 annually since FY 01.

### *Parks and Open Space Bond*

In 1998, voters approved a \$25.3 million park and open space measure to fund major park improvements and acquisitions. Repayment is spread over 20 years. Table 18 shows the project types funded by the bond issue.

### *System Development Charge (SDC) Funding*

Since 1991, the City has charged new residential development a systems development charge (SDC) for parks. This fee can be used only for the acquisition and development of parks and open space areas. The current SDC rate is \$1,344.65 for all housing units. Prior to October 1, 2003, the rate was \$981.89. Table 19 summarizes the amount of revenue generated by this program from FY 98 to FY 02.





City or District	Population	Park and Recreation Budget	Gross Cost/ Capita	Net Cost/ Capita <sup>1</sup>	Revenue Rate
City of Eugene (FY 04)	145,700 <sup>2</sup>	\$12,572,402	\$86.29	\$67.05	22.3%
City of Eugene (FY 02)	142,380	\$10,480,574	\$73.61	\$56.13	23.7%
Willamalane Park and Recreation District, Oregon	57,000	\$8,193,075	\$143.74	\$110.67	23.0%
City of Medford, Oregon	64,700	\$2,672,000	\$41.30	\$35.12	15.0%
City of Corvallis, Oregon	51,040	\$4,582,610	\$89.78	\$66.66	25.7%
Tualatin Hills Park and Recreation District, Oregon	200,000	\$18,755,259	\$93.78	\$67.01	28.5%
City of Hillsboro, Oregon	74,840	\$6,579,445	\$87.91	\$73.46	16.4%
City of Spokane, Washington	195,629	\$11,932,287	\$60.99	\$45.45	25.5%

Table 16: Operating Budgets for Park and Recreation Services, Selected Park Agencies

<sup>1</sup> Calculated from the budget after revenues from rentals, fees and charges have been deducted.

<sup>2</sup> Estimated by MIG Inc.

Notes about Table 16:

- The increase in cost per capita for park and recreation services in Eugene between FY 2002 and FY 2004 can be attributed to the passage of the local option levies.
- The cost per capita for park and recreation services in Eugene is within the range of similar agencies listed, except for Willamalane Park and Recreation District.
- The revenue rate for park and recreation services in Eugene is about average for the agencies listed.

Year	General Fund	Parks SDCs	POS Bonds	Other Funds	Total	% of 10 Year Total
FY 92	\$41	\$7	\$0	\$0	\$48	0%
FY 93	\$150,711	\$29,917	\$0	\$0	\$180,628	.8%
FY 94	\$142,611	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$142,611	.6%
FY 95	\$91,933	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$91,933	.4%
FY 96	\$198,395	\$3,593	\$0	\$10,000	\$211,989	1.0%
FY 97	\$44,964	\$1,265,370	\$0	\$0	\$1,310,334	5.9%
FY 98	\$131,133	\$969,826	\$0	\$2,415	\$1,103,334	5.0%
FY 99	\$196,516	\$812,499	\$105,093	\$85,998	\$1,200,105	5.4%
FY 00	\$88,401	\$479,943	\$2,983,445	\$20,647	\$3,572,436	16.2%
FY 01	\$425,236	\$516,085	\$9,931,908	\$375,437	\$11,248,655	51.0%
FY 02	\$109,150	\$573,402	\$2,139,750	\$178,382	\$3,000,684	13.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,579,090</b>	<b>\$4,650,643</b>	<b>15,160,196</b>	<b>\$672,869</b>	<b>22,062,798</b>	

Table 17: Parks and Open Space Capital Funding History, FY 92 - FY 02.



Project Type	POS Bond Amount
Regional/Community Facilities	11,750,000
Athletic Field Upgrades	750,000
Neighborhood Park Development	3,430,000
Parkland Acquisition	5,350,000
Ridgeline Expansion	3,720,000
Administrative Cost	300,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$25,300,000</b>

Table 18: Park Bond Budget

Notes about Table 18:

- The Regional/Community Facilities include Amazon Pool Renovation and Youth Sports Parks.

Year	SDC Amount
2002	\$978,715
2001	\$1,016,700
2000	\$1,187,700
1999	\$1,627,600
1998	\$959,450

Table 19: Money Collected from Park SDCs, FY 98 - FY 02.

#### *Other Capital Funding Sources*

While SDCs are the major sources of capital development money, the City also has other available sources including grants, money from foundations, donations, exchanges of property and partnerships with other organizations or private groups. Grants and other sources have contributed over \$175,000 annually since FY 01.

### **E. Other Funding Programs**

#### *Operating Levies*

The City has passed two local option levies that help fund park and recreation services. The first is Measure 20-37, which is a 2-year levy raising approximately \$1.75 million per year. The levy rate is \$0.21 per \$1,000 assessed valuation and is in affect in fiscal years 2001-2002 and 2003-2004. The levy expires at the end of December 2003. The money is used to provide neighborhood-based youth activities during non-school hours. The City's portion of the levy is about \$714,000 per year with the rest going to two school districts and some other service agencies.



Measure 20-67 was passed in November 2002 and is a 4-year local option levy that will raise approximately \$31.5 million over the four years. The levy rate is \$0.86 per \$1,000 assessed valuation. The City will receive about \$425,000 per year with the rest going to the Eugene and Bethel School Districts. The funds received by the City will be used to fund youth services such as Summer Fun for All activities. The school portion will be used for recreation activities as well as other student and school activities.

#### *Other Parks and Open Space Programs*

Within the POS Division, a number of programs and staff are responsible for portions of the City's stormwater program. This includes the management and maintenance of the West Eugene Wetlands and open waterways. This work is funded with stormwater funds for operations and capital projects and with Wetland Mitigation Bank Funds.

Also within the POS Division resides the Urban Forestry program. This program provides for management and maintenance of trees within the public street right-of-way. In past years, this program has had a direct relationship to the Parks program by being responsible for the management of forests within parklands. However, due to a series of General Fund budget reductions over the past few years, no General Fund monies remain within Urban Forestry for work in parks. Currently, all work performed on trees within parks is funded by park maintenance.

The Street Median Maintenance program also resides within the POS Division. Totally funded through the Road Fund, this service provides maintenance to all landscaped medians within the city.



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